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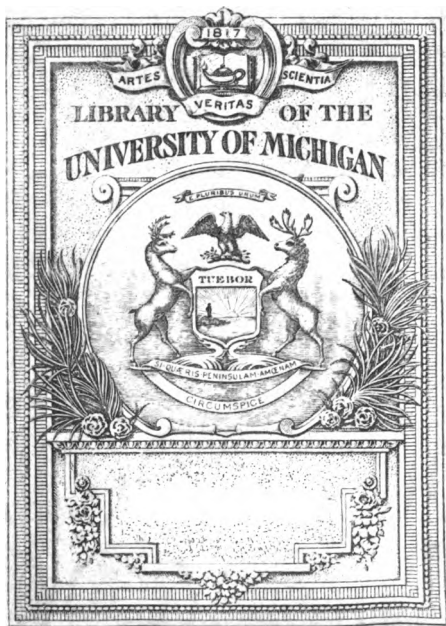
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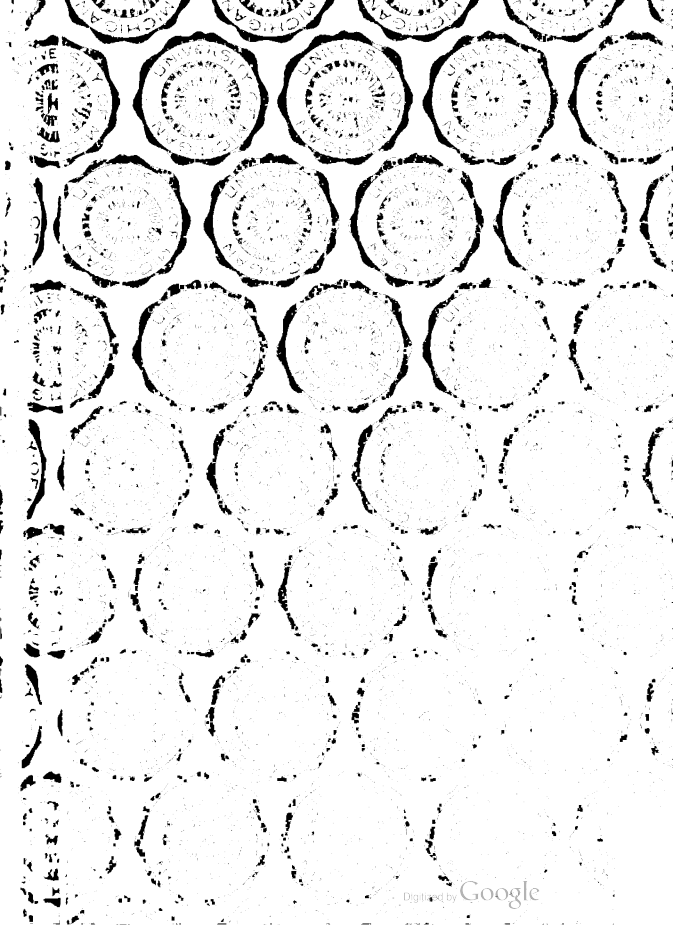
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# SHAKESPEARE'S H<sup>AM</sup>LET.

WITH  
NOTES, EXAMINATION PAPERS, AND PLAN  
OF PREPARATION.

(SELECTED.)

By BRAINERD KELLOGG, A.M.,

*Professor of the English Language and Literature in the Brooklyn College and Polytechnic Institute, and author of a "Text-Book on Rhetoric," a "Text-Book on English Literature," and one of the authors of Reed & Kellogg's "Graded Lessons in English," and "Higher Lessons in English."*



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## EDITOR'S NOTE.

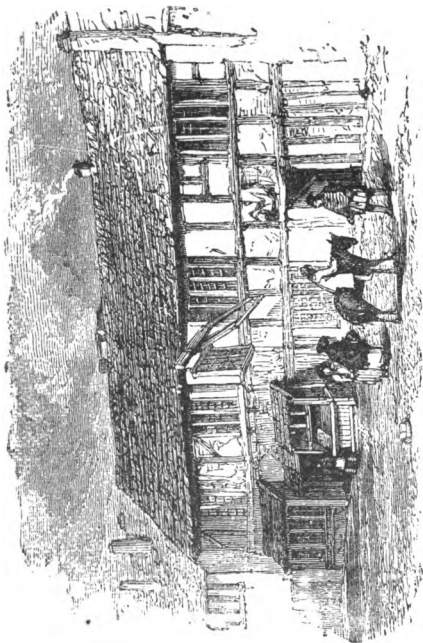
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THE text here presented, adapted for use in mixed classes, has been carefully collated with that of six or seven of the latest and best editions. Where there was any disagreement those readings have been adopted which seemed most reasonable and were supported by the best authority.

The notes of English editors have been freely used. Those taken as the basis of our work have been rigorously pruned wherever they were thought too learned or too minute, or contained matter that for any other reason seemed unsuited to our purpose. We have generously added to them, also, wherever they seemed to be lacking.

B. K.

209702



**THE HOUSE IN WHICH SHAKESPEARE WAS BORN.**

**From a drawing by J. W. Archer.**

## GENERAL NOTICE.

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"AN attempt has been made in these new editions to interpret Shakespeare by the aid of Shakespeare himself. The Method of Comparison has been constantly employed ; and the language used by him in one place has been compared with the language used in other places in similar circumstances, as well as with older English and with newer English. The text has been as carefully and as thoroughly annotated as the text of any Greek or Latin classic.

"The first purpose in this elaborate annotation is, of course the full working out of Shakespeare's meaning. The Editor has in all circumstances taken as much pains with this as if he had been making out the difficult and obscure terms of a will in which he himself was personally interested ; and he submits that this thorough excavation of the meaning of a really profound thinker is one of the very best kinds of training that a boy or girl can receive at school. This is to read the very mind of Shakespeare, and to weave his thoughts into the fibre of one's own mental constitution. And always new rewards come to the careful reader—in the shape of new meanings, recognition of

thoughts he had before missed, of relations between the characters that had hitherto escaped him. For reading Shakespeare is just like examining Nature; there are no hollownesses, there is no scamped work, for Shakespeare is as patiently exact and as first-hand as Nature herself.

"Besides this thorough working-out of Shakespeare's meaning, advantage has been taken of the opportunity to teach his English—to make each play an introduction to the ENGLISH OF SHAKESPEARE. For this purpose copious collections of similar phrases have been gathered from other plays; his idioms have been dwelt upon; his peculiar use of words; his style and his rhythm. Some Teachers may consider that too many instances are given; but, in teaching, as in everything else, the old French saying is true: *Assez n'y a, s'il trop n'y a*. The Teacher need not require each pupil to give him *all* the instances collected. If each gives one or two, it will probably be enough; and, among them all, it is certain that one or two will stick in the memory. It is probable that, for those pupils who do not study either Greek or Latin, this close examination of every word and phrase in the text of Shakespeare will be the best substitute that can be found for the study of the ancient classics.

"It were much to be hoped that Shakespeare should become more and more of a study, and that every boy and girl should have a thorough knowledge of at least one play of Shakespeare before leaving school. It would be one of the best lessons in human life, without the chance of a polluting or degrading experience. It would also have the effect of bringing back into the too pale and formal English of modern times a large number of pithy and

vigorous phrases which would help to develop as well as to reflect vigor in the characters of the readers. Shakespeare used the English language with more power than any other writer that ever lived—he made it do more and say more than it had ever done ; he made it speak in a more original way ; and his combinations of words are perpetual provocations and invitations to originality and to newness of insight.”—J. M. D. MEIKLEJOHN, M.A., *Professor of the Theory, History, and Practice of Education in the University of St. Andrews.*

## Shakespeare's Grammar.

Shakespeare lived at a time when the grammar and vocabulary of the English language were in a state of transition. Various points were not yet settled; and so Shakespeare's grammar is not only somewhat different from our own but is by no means uniform in itself. In the Elizabethan age, "Almost any part of speech can be used as any other part of speech. An adverb can be used as a verb, 'They *askance* their eyes;' as a noun, 'the *backward* and abyss of time;' or as an adjective, 'a *seldom* pleasure.' Any noun, adjective, or intransitive verb can be used as a transitive verb. You can 'happy' your friend, 'malice' or 'foot' your enemy, or 'fall' an axe on his neck. An adjective can be used as an adverb; and you can speak and act 'easy,' 'free,' 'excellent;' or as a noun, and you can talk of 'fair' instead of 'beauty,' and 'a pale' instead of 'a paleness.' Even the pronouns are not exempt from these metamorphoses. A 'he' is used for a man, and a lady is described by a gentleman as 'the fairest *she* he has yet beheld.' In the second place, every variety of apparent grammatical inaccuracy meets us. *He* for *him*, *him* for *he*; *spoke* and *took* for *spoken* and *taken*; plural nominatives with singular verbs; relatives omitted where they are now considered necessary; unnecessary antecedents inserted; *shall* for *will*, *should* for *would*, *would* for *wish*; *to* omitted after 'I ought,' inserted after 'I durst;' double negatives; double comparatives ('more better,' &c.) and superlatives; *such* followed by *which*, *that* by *as*, *as* used for *as if*; *that* for *so that*; and lastly some verbs apparently with two nominatives, and others without any nominative at all." — Dr. Abbott's *Shakesperian Grammar*.

## Shakespeare's Versification.

Shakespeare's Plays are written mainly in what is known as *blank verse*; but they contain a number of riming, and a considerable number of prose, lines. As a rule, rime is much commoner in the earlier than in the later plays. Thus, *Love's Labor's Lost* contains nearly 1,100 riming lines, while (if we except the songs) *Winter's Tale* has none. *The Merchant of Venice* has 124.

In speaking, we lay a stress on particular syllables: this stress is called *accent*. When the words of a composition are so arranged that the accent recurs at regular intervals, the composition is said to be *rhythmical*. In blank verse the lines consist usually of ten syllables, of which the second, fourth, sixth,

eight, and tenth are accented. The line consists, therefore, of five parts, each of which contains an unaccented syllable, as in the word *attend*. Each of these five parts forms what is called a *foot* or *measure*; and the five together form a *pentameter*. "Pentameter" is a Greek word signifying "five measures." This is the usual form of a line of blank verse. But a long poem composed entirely of such lines would be monotonous, and for the sake of variety several important modifications have been introduced.

(a) After the tenth syllable, one or two unaccented syllables are sometimes added; as—

"*Me-thought | you said | you nei | ther lend | nor bor | row.*"

(b) In any foot the accent may be shifted from the second to the first syllable, provided two accented syllables do not come together.

"*Pluck' the | young suck' | ing cubs' | from the' | she bear'.*" |

(c) In such words as "yesterday," "voluntary," "honesty," the syllables *-day*, *-ta-*, and *-ty* falling in the place of the accent, are, for the purposes of the verse, regarded as truly accented.

"*Bars' me | the right' | of vol'- | un-ta' | ry choos' | ing.*"

(d) Sometimes we have a succession of accented syllables; this occurs with monosyllabic feet only.

"*Why, now, blow wind, swell billow, and swim bark.*"

(e) Sometimes, but more rarely, two or even three unaccented syllables occupy the place of one; as—

"*He says | he does, | be-ing then | most flat | ter-ed.*"

(f) Lines may have any number of feet from one to six.

Finally, Shakespeare adds much to the pleasing variety of his blank verse by placing the pauses in different parts of the line (especially after the second or third foot), instead of placing them all at the ends of lines, as was the earlier custom.

N. B.—In some cases the rhythm requires that what we usually pronounce as one syllable shall be divided into two, as *fi-er* (fire), *su-er* (sure), *mi-el* (mile), &c.; *too-elve* (twelve), *jaw-ee* (joy), &c. Similarly, *she-on* (-tion or -sion).

It is very important to give the pupil plenty of ear-training by means of formal scansion. This will greatly assist him in his reading.



**PLAN OF STUDY**  
**FOR**  
**‘PERFECT POSSESSION.’**

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To attain to the standard of ‘Perfect Possession,’ the reader ought to have an intimate and ready knowledge of the subject. (See opposite page.)

The student ought, first of all, to read the play as a pleasure ; then to read it over again, with his mind upon the characters and the plot ; and lastly, to read it for the meanings, grammar, &c.

With the help of the scheme, he can easily draw up for himself short examination papers (1) on each scene, (2) on each act, (3) on the whole play. (See page 230.)

**1. The Plot and Story of the Play.**

- (a) The general plot ;
- (b) The special incidents.

**2. The Characters:** Ability to give a connected account of all that is done and most of what is said by each character in the play.**3. The Influence and Interplay of the Characters upon each other.**

- (a) Relation of A to B and of B to A ;
- (b) Relation of A to C and D.

**4. Complete Possession of the Language.**

- (a) Meanings of words ;
- (b) Use of old words, or of words in an old meaning ;
- (c) Grammar ;
- (d) Ability to quote lines to illustrate a grammatical point.

**5. Power to Reproduce, or Quote.**

- (a) What was said by A or B on a particular occasion ;
- (b) What was said by A in reply to B ;
- (c) What argument was used by C at a particular juncture ;
- (d) To quote a line in instance of an idiom or of a peculiar meaning.

**6. Power to Locate.**

- (a) To attribute a line or statement to a certain person on a certain occasion ;
- (b) To cap a line ;
- (c) To fill in the right word or epithet.

# INTRODUCTION

TO

## HAMLET

---

1. The first known edition of *Hamlet* appeared in 1603.  
It bore the following title-page :—

THE  
Tragicall Historie of HAMLET  
*Prince of Denmarke*  
By William Shake-speare.

As it hath beene diuerse times acted by his Highnesse seruants in the Cittie of London : as also in the two Vniuersities of Cambridge and Oxford, and elsewhere  
At London printed for N. L. and John Trundell. 1603.

The second quarto appeared in the following year, with a title-page much altered :—

THE  
Tragicall Historie of  
HAMLET,  
*Prince of Denmarke.*  
By William Shakespeare.

Newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect Coppie.

AT LONDON,  
Printed by I. R. for N. L., and are to be sold at his shoppe vnder St. Dunston's Church in Fleetstreet 1604.

It was upon this second quarto that all future editions of the play were based. It is conjectured that Shakespeare worked upon the basis of an old play, an edition of which is known to have appeared in 1602; that the quarto of 1603 represents his remodelling of this old play; and that the edition of 1604 was a complete and final recast.

2. The story seems to have been drawn from the *Historia Danica* of Saxo Grammaticus, a native of Elsinore, who wrote about the end of the twelfth century; though the earliest existing edition of his history has the date of 1514. A French writer, Francis de Belleforest, embodied the story of *Amleth*, *Hamlet*, or *Hamblet* in his *Histoires Tragiques*; and an unknown English writer translated this story and published it separately under the title of *The Hystorie of Hamblet*—a black-letter quarto copy of which, bearing the date of 1608, exists in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge.

3. The play of *Hamlet* is the longest of Shakespeare's plays; and it is one of the greatest. It is also the most varied in incident; and the argument of the play would make a very long story. Though full of incident, the main interest of the play is centred in thought and character—in the moods of mind through which Hamlet passes, until he meets death in the fulfilment of the purpose towards which he has not marched or hastened, but simply drifted. There has also been more written about *Hamlet* than about any other play in the world. The books, pamphlets, and papers that have appeared on this play would constitute a respectable library. The play belongs to what has been called Shakespeare's period of 'Middle Tragedy'; and its companion in this category is *Julius*

*Cæsar*. Both are tragedies of thought ; and both were written when Shakespeare was about thirty-seven or thirty-eight.

4. The young reader may with advantage study fully and carefully the character of Hamlet, as it stands out from and over against the circumstances which surround him, and as it may be interpreted—by the aid of contrast—by the characters of the other personages of the play. He is a student at the University of Wittenberg ; he hears of the sudden and mysterious death of his father ; he hastens home to find his mother married to his uncle—an event which shocks his soul and begins to poison his feelings towards his mother ; he hears of the appearance of his father's ghost ; he has an interview with it and a stern task laid upon him ; the whole of the habits of his previous life are broken up ; he is tortured by grief, doubt, love, and difficulty ; and only in dying does he attain to clearness of mind and strength of soul. After having studied the relation of Hamlet to the circumstances and characters that surround him, the reader may take the other personages of the play and study them in pairs. Thus Horatio may be compared with Laertes ; and both again with Hamlet. Horatio says little, and is little affected by external events. Laertes is a worldly man—the son of his father ; and with no inner life at all. He is as thoughtless as Hamlet is thoughtful—as rash and eager for action as Hamlet is filled to excess with considerations, reflections, and balancings of judgment. Claudius, again, stands in direct contrast with the late King (see III. iv. 56-66). Polonius, full of wise maxims which he has lost the power of applying to present exigencies, may be contrasted

with Horatio, who says nothing, but is always ready to help, whatever may happen. Osric, in the end of the play, is an admirable set-off to the quiet soldierliness of Marcellus and Bernardo, in the beginning. Ophelia, with her deep, unspeaking nature—one of those persons ‘who live only in their own hearts, and upon their own hearts’—forms a noble contrast to the shallow external nature of the Queen, whose conscience and heart do not begin to speak until they are appealed to in the directest and strongest way by Hamlet himself and by tragical events.

5. The following are extracts from the most celebrated criticisms of the characters of this play :—

**HAMLET.**—(i.) ‘Tender and nobly descended, this royal flower grew up under the direct influences of majesty; the idea of the right and of princely dignity, the feeling for the good and the graceful, with the consciousness of his high birth, were unfolded in him together. He was a prince, a born prince. Pleasing in figure, polished by nature, courteous from the heart, he was to be the model of youth and the delight of the world. . . . Figure to yourself this youth, this son of princes, conceive him vividly, bring his condition before your eyes, and then observe him when he learns that his father's spirit walks; stand by him in the terrible night when the venerable Ghost itself appears before him. A horrid shudder seizes him; he speaks to the mysterious form; he sees it beckon him; he follows it and hearkens. The fearful accusation of his uncle rings in his ears; the summons to revenge and the piercing reiterated prayer, “Remember me.” . . . And, when the Ghost has vanished, who is it we see standing before us? A young hero panting for vengeance? A born prince, feeling himself favored in being summoned to punish the usurper of his crown? No! Amazement and sorrow overwhelm the solitary young man; he becomes bitter against smiling villains, swears never to forget the departed, and concludes with the significant ejaculation :—

“The time is out of joint : O cursed spite,  
That ever I was born to set it right !”

'In these words, I imagine, will be found the key to Hamlet's whole procedure. To me it is clear that Shakespeare meant, in the present case, to represent the effects of a great action laid upon a soul unfit for the performance of it. In this view the whole piece seems to me to be composed. There is an oak-tree planted in a costly jar, which should have borne only pleasant flowers in its bosom; the roots expand, the jar is shivered. A lovely, pure, noble, and most moral nature, without the strength of nerve which forms a hero, sinks beneath a burden which it cannot bear, and must not cast away. All duties are holy for him; the present is too hard. Impossibilities have been required of him; not in themselves impossibilities, but such for him. He winds, and turns, and torments himself; he advances and recoils; is ever put in mind, ever puts himself in mind; at last does all but lose his purpose from his thoughts; yet still without recovering his peace of mind.'—GOETHE (*Wilhelm Meister*).

(ii.) 'In *Hamlet* Shakespeare seems to have wished to exemplify the moral necessity of a due balance between our attention to the objects of our senses, and our meditations on the workings of our minds—an equilibrium between the real and the imaginary worlds. In *Hamlet* this balance is disturbed; his thoughts, and the images of his fancy, are far more vivid than his actual perceptions, and his very perceptions, instantly passing through the medium of his contemplations, acquire, as they pass, a form and a color not naturally their own. Hence we see a great, an almost enormous intellectual activity, and a proportionate aversion to real action, consequent upon it, with all its symptoms and accompanying qualities. This character Shakespeare places in circumstances under which it is obliged to act on the spur of the moment: Hamlet is brave and careless of death; but he vacillates from sensibility, and procrastinates from thought, and loses the power of action in the energy of resolve. Thus it is that this tragedy presents a direct contrast to that of *Macbeth*; the one proceeds with the utmost slowness, the other with a crowded and breathless rapidity. The effect of this overbalance of the imaginative power is beautifully illustrated in the everlasting brooding and superfluous activities of Hamlet's mind, which, unseated from its healthy relation, is constantly occupied with the world within, and abstracted from the world without—giving substance to shadows, and throwing a mist over all commonplace actualities.'—COLERIDGE.

(iii.) 'Hamlet is called upon to assert moral order in a world of moral confusion and obscurity. . . . All the strength which he possesses would have become organized and available had his world been one of honesty, of happiness, of human love. But a world of deceit, of espionage, of selfishness surrounds him ; his idealism at thirty years of age almost takes the form of pessimism ; his life and his heart become sterile ; he loses the energy which sound and joyous feelings supply ; and in the wide-spreading waste of corruption which lies around him, he is tempted to understand and detest things rather than accomplish some limited practical service. . . . Hamlet is not merely or chiefly intellectual ; the emotional side of his character is quite as important as the intellectual ; his malady is as deep-seated in his sensibilities and in his heart as it is in the brain. If all his feelings translate themselves into thoughts, it is no less true that all his thoughts are impregnated with feeling. To represent Hamlet as a man of preponderating power of reflection, and to disregard his craving, sensitive heart, is to make the whole play incoherent and unintelligible. . . . During the reign of the strong-willed elder Hamlet, there was no call to action for his meditative son. He has slipped on into years of full manhood still a haunter of the university, a student of philosophies, an amateur in art, a ponderer on the things of life and death, who has never formed a resolution or executed a deed. This long course of thinking, apart from action, has destroyed Hamlet's very capacity for belief : since in belief there exists a certain element contributed by the will.'—DOWDEN (*Mind and Art of Shakespeare*, pp. 130-133).

OPHELIA.—'It is the helplessness of Ophelia, arising merely from her innocence, and pictured without any indication of weakness, which melts us with such profound pity. She is so young that neither her mind nor her person has attained maturity ; she is not aware of the nature of her own feelings ; they are prematurely developed in their full force before she has strength to bear them ; and love and grief together rend and shatter the frail texture of her existence, like the burning fluid poured into a crystal vase. She says very little, and what she does say seems rather intended to hide than to reveal the emotions of her heart : yet in those few words we are made as perfectly acquainted with her character and with what is passing in her mind as if she had thrown forth her soul with all the glowing eloquence of Juliet. . . . Constance is frantic : Lear is mad ; Ophelia is in-



sane. Her sweet mind lies in fragments before us—a pitiful spectacle! Her wild, rambling fancies; her aimless, broken speeches; her quick transitions from gaiety to sadness—each equally purposeless and causeless; her snatches of old ballads—such as perhaps her nurse sang her to sleep with in her infancy—are all so true to the life, that we forget to wonder, and can only weep.’—MRS. JAMESON (*Characteristics of Women*).

‘The pathos proceeds from the utter insensibility Ophelia has to her own misfortunes. A great sensibility, or none at all, seems to produce the same effect. In the latter the audience supply what she wants, and with the former they sympathize.’—SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

POLONIUS.—‘Polonius is a man bred in courts, exercised in business, stored with observation, confident in his knowledge, proud of his eloquence, and declining into dotage. His mode of oratory is truly represented as designed to ridicule the practice of those times, of prefaces that made no introduction, and of method that embarrassed rather than explained. This part of his character is accidental; the rest is natural. Such a man is positive and confident, because he knows that his mind was once strong, and knows not that it is become weak. Such a man excels in general principles, but fails in the particular application. He is knowing in retrospect, and ignorant in foresight.’—DR. JOHNSON.

‘Polonius has no difficulty in calling to mind a number of wise precepts for the guidance of his son’s conduct, the last of which is most striking for its force and nobleness. Yet it is undeniable that he is often both foolish and mean. The reason is that his memory has outlived his intellect; that prettinesses have taken the place of wisdom in his mind; that he recalls words of wisdom and noble sentiments rather than feels them; and that his acknowledged services have so persuaded him of his own merit that he will both act meanly and express himself absurdly, because he conceives, without any misgiving at all, that whatever he does or says is justified by his saying or doing it. Still, in estimating this character, we should do well to remember that the use of language like that of Polonius’ would not, in Shakespeare’s euphuistic days, argue the complete folly which it would at the present time.’—MR. MOBERLY.



## PERSONS REPRESENTED.

**CLAUDIUS**, *King of Denmark.*

**HAMLET**, *son to the late, and nephew to the present King.*

**POLONIUS**, *Lord Chamberlain.*

**HORATIO**, *friend to Hamlet.*

**LAERTES**, *son to Polonius.*

**VOLTIMAND**,

**CORNELIUS**,

**ROSENCRANTZ**,

**GUILDENSTERN**,

**OSRIC**,

*A Gentleman.*

*A Priest.*

**MARCELLUS**,

**BERNARDO**,

} *Officers.*

**FRANCISCO**, *a Soldier.*

**REYNALDO**, *servant to Polonius.*

*Players.*

*Two Clowns, grave-diggers.*

**FORTINBRAS**, *Prince of Norway.*

*A Captain.*

*English Ambassadors.*

**GERTRUDE**, *Queen of Denmark, and mother to Hamlet.*

**OPHELIA**, *daughter to Polonius.*

*Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Sailors, Messengers,  
and other Attendants.*

*Ghost of Hamlet's father.*

**SCENE**,--**ELSinORE.**

# HAMLET,

## PRINCE OF DENMARK.

### ACT I.

#### SCENE I.—Elsinore. *A Platform before the Castle.*

FRANCISCO *on guard.* Enter to him BERNARDO.  
*Bernardo.*



HO'S there?

*Fran.* Nay, answer me: stand,  
and unfold yourself.

*Ber.* Long live the king!

*Fran.*

Bernardo?

*Ber.*

He.

*Fran.* You come most carefully upon your  
hour.

*Ber.* 'Tis now struck twelve; get thee to  
bed, Francisco.

*Fran.* For this relief, much thanks; 'tis  
bitter cold,

And I am sick at heart.

*Ber.* Have you had quiet guard?

*Fran.*

Not a mouse stirring. 10

*Ber.* Well, good night.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,

The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

(7)

*Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.*

*Fran.* I think I hear 'them.—Stand, ho!  
Who is there?

*Hor.* Friends to this ground.

*Mar.* And liegemen to the Dane.

*Fran.* Give you good night.

*Mar.* O, farewell, honest soldier:  
Who hath relieved you?

*Fran.* Bernardo hath my place.  
Give you good night. *[Exit.*

*Mar.* Holla! Bernardo!

*Ber.* Say,  
What, is Horatio there?

*Hor.* A piece of him.

*Ber.* Welcome, Horatio; welcome, good  
20 Marcellus.

*Mar.* What, has this thing appeared again  
to-night?

*Ber.* I have seen nothing.

*Mar.* Horatio says 'tis but our fantasy;  
And will not let belief take hold of him  
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of  
us:

Therefore I have entreated him along  
With us to watch the minutes of this night,  
That, if again this apparition come,  
He may approve our eyes and speak to it.

*Hor.* Tush! tush! 'twill not appear.

30 *Ber.* Sit down awhile;  
And let us once again assail your ears,  
That are so fortified against our story,  
Which two nights have seen.

*Hor.* Well, sit we down,  
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

*Ber.* Last night of all,  
When yon same star that's westward from  
the pole [heaven  
Had made his course to illume that part of  
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,  
The bell then beating one,—

*Mar.* Peace, break thee off ; look, where it 40  
comes again !

*Enter Ghost.*

*Ber.* In the same figure, like the king that's  
dead.

*Mar.* Thou art a scholar ; speak to it, Ho-  
ratio.

*Ber.* Looks it not like the king ? mark it,  
Horatio.

*Hor.* Most like :—it harrows me with fear  
and wonder.

*Ber.* It would be spoke to.

*Mar.* Question it, Horatio.

*Hor.* What art thou, that usurp'st this time  
of night ?

Together with that fair and warlike form  
In which the majesty of buried Denmark  
Did sometimes march ? by heaven I charge  
thee, speak.

*Mar.* It is offended.

*Ber.* See, it stalks away. 50

*Hor.* Stay ; speak : speak ! I charge thee,  
speak ! [Exit Ghost.

*Mar.* 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

*Ber.* How now, Horatio? you tremble  
and look pale :  
Is not this something more than fantasy?  
What think you on't?

*Hor.* Before my God, I might not this be-  
lieve  
Without the sensible and true avouch  
Of mine own eyes.

*Mar.* Is it not like the king?

*Hor.* As thou art to thyself :  
Such was the very armor he had on  
60 When he the ambitious Norway combated ;  
So frown'd he once, when, in an angry parle,  
He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.  
'Tis strange.

*Mar.* Thus twice before, and jump at this  
dead hour, [watch.  
With martial stalk hath he gone by our

*Hor.* In what particular thought to work I  
know not ;  
~~But, in the gross and scope of my opinion,~~  
This bodes some strange eruption to our  
state.

*Mar.* Good now, sit down, and tell me, he  
70 that knows, [watch  
Why this same strict and most observant  
So nightly toils the subject of the land ;  
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,  
And foreign mart for implements of war ;  
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose  
sore task  
Does not divide the Sunday from the week :  
What might be toward that this sweaty haste

Doth make the night joint-laborer with the  
day;

Who is't that can inform me?

*Hor.*

That can I;

At least the whisper goes so. Our last king,  
Whose image even but now appear'd to us, 80  
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,  
Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,  
Dared to the combat; in which our valiant  
Hamlet

(For so this side of our known world es-  
teem'd him) [compact,

Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by a seal'd  
Well ratified by law and heraldry,  
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands  
Which he stood seized of, to the conqueror:  
Against the which, a moiety competent  
Was gag'd by our king; which had return'd 90  
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,  
Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same  
covenant

And carriage of the article design'd,  
His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortin-  
bras,

Of unimprov'd mettle hot and full,  
Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there  
Shark'd up a list of lawless resolute,  
For food and diet, to some enterprise  
That hath a stomach in't: which is no other  
(As it doth well appear unto our state) 100  
But to recover of us, by strong hand [lands  
And terms compulsative, those 'foresaid  
So by his father lost: and this, I take it,



Is the main motive of our preparations,  
The source of this our watch, and the chief  
head

Of this post-haste and romage in the land.

*Ber.* I think it be no other but even so:  
Well may it sort that this portentous figure  
Comes armèd through our watch : so like the  
king

110 That was and is the question of these wars.

*Hor.* A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.  
In the most high and palmy state of Rome,  
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,  
The graves stood tenantless and the sheeted  
dead

Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets :  
As stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,  
Disasters in the sun ; and the moist star,  
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire  
stands,

Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse.

120 And even the like precurse of fierce events,  
As harbingers preceding still the fates  
And prologue to the omen coming on,  
Have heaven and earth together demon-  
strated

Unto our climature and countrymen.—

, But, soft ; behold ! lo, where it comes again !

*Re-enter Ghost.*

I'll cross it, though it blast me.—Stay, illu-  
sion !

If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,  
Speak to me :

If there be any good thing to be done,  
That may to thee do ease and grace to me, 130  
Speak to me :

If thou art privy to thy country's fate,  
Which, happily, foreknowing may avoid,  
O, speak !

Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life  
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,  
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in  
death, [Cock crows.

Speak of it :—stay, and speak.—Stop it, Mar-  
cellus.

*Mar.* Shall I strike at it with my partisan ?

*Hor.* Do, if it will not stand.

*Ber.* 'Tis here !

*Hor.* 'Tis here ! 140

*Mar.* 'Tis gone ! [Exit Ghost.

We do it wrong, being so majestical,  
To offer it the show of violence ;  
For it is, as the air, invulnerable,  
And our vain blows malicious mockery.

*Ber.* It was about to speak, when the cock  
crew.

*Hor.* And then it started like a guilty  
thing

Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,  
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,  
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding  
throat

Awake the god of day ; and, at his warning,  
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,  
The extravagant and erring spirit hies  
To his confine : and of the truth herein  
This present object made probation. 150

*Mar.* It faded on the crowing of the cock.  
Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes  
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,  
The bird of dawning singeth all night long;  
160 And then, they say, no spirit dare stir abroad;  
The nights are wholesome; then no planets  
strike,

No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,  
So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

*Hor.* So have I heard and do in part believe it.

But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,  
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill:  
Break we our watch up; and, by my advice,  
Let us impart what we have seen to-night  
Unto young Hamlet: for, upon my life,  
170 This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him:  
Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,  
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

*Mar.* Let's do't, I pray: and I this morning know  
Where we shall find him most conveniently.  
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The same. A Room of State  
in the Castle.*

*Enter the KING, QUEEN, HAMLET, POLONIUS,  
LAERTES, VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, Lords,  
and Attendants.*

*King.* Though yet of Hamlet our dear  
brother's death  
The memory be green; and that it us befitted

To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole  
kingdom

To be contracted in one brow of woe ;  
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature  
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,  
Together with remembrance of ourselves.

Therefore our sometime sister, now our  
queen,

The imperial jointress of this warlike state,  
Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,— 10  
With one auspicious and one dropping eye,  
With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,

In equal scale weighing delight and dole,—  
Taken to wife : nor have we herein barr'd  
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone  
With this affair along :—for all, our thanks.  
Now follows that you know, young Fortinbras,

Holding a weak supposal of our worth,  
Or thinking by our late dear brother's death  
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame, 20  
Colleaguèd with the dream of his advantage,—

He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,  
Importing the surrender of those lands  
Lost by his father, with all bonds of law,  
To our most valiant brother.—So much for  
him.

Now for ourself and for this time of meeting.  
Thus much the business is : we have here  
writ

To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,

- Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears  
30 Of this his nephew's purpose, to suppress  
His further gait herein ; in that the levies,  
The lists, and full proportions, are all made  
Out of his subject : and we here dispatch  
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,  
For bearers of this greeting to old Norway ;  
Giving to you no further personal power  
To business with the king more than the  
scope  
Of these dilated articles allow. [duty.  
Farewell ; and let your haste commend your  
Cor., Vol. in that and all things will we  
40 show our duty.  
*King.* We doubt it nothing ; heartily fare-  
well.—

[*Exeunt* VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS

- And now, Laertes, what's the news with you ?  
You told us of some suit : what is't, Laertes ?  
You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,  
And lose your voice : what wouldst thou beg,  
Laertes,  
That shall not be my offer, not thy asking ?  
The head is not more native to the heart,  
The hand more instrumental to the mouth,  
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.  
What wouldst thou have, Laertes ?  
50 *Laer.* Dread my lord,  
Your leave and favor to return to France ;  
From whence though willingly I came to Den-  
mark,  
To show my duty in your coronation,  
Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,

My thoughts and wishes bend again toward  
France, [pardon.

And bow them to your gracious leave and  
*King.* Have you your father's leave?  
What says Polonius?

*Pol.* He hath, my lord, wrung from me my  
slow leave,

By laborsome petition; and at last  
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent: 60  
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

*King.* Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time  
be thine,

And thy best graces spend it at thy will!  
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,—

*Ham.* [*aside.*] A little more than kin, and  
less than kind.

*King.* How is it that the clouds still hang  
on you?

*Ham.* Not so, my lord, I am too much i'  
the sun. [color off,

*Queen.* Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted  
And let thine eye look like a friend on Den-  
mark.

Do not for ever with thy vailèd lids 70  
Seek for thy noble father in the dust:  
Thou know'st 'tis common; all that lives  
must die,

Passing through nature to eternity.

*Ham.* Ay, madam, it is common.

*Queen.*

If it be,

Why seems it so particular with thee?

*Ham.* Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know  
not seems.



From the first corse till he that died to-day,  
*This must be so.* We pray you, throw to  
 earth

This unprevailing woe, and think of us  
 As of a father: for let the world take note,  
 You are the most immediate to our throne,  
 And with no less nobility of love, 110  
 Than that which dearest father bears his son  
 Do I impart toward you. For your intent  
 In going back to school in Wittenberg,  
 It is most retrograde to our desire:  
 And we beseech you, bend you to remain  
 Here in the cheer and comfort of our eye,  
 Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

*Queen.* Let not thy mother lose her prayers,  
 Hamlet; [berg.

I pray thee, stay with us; go not to Witten-  
*Ham.* I shall in all my best obey you,  
 madam. 120

*King.* Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply;  
 Be as ourself in Denmark.—Madam, come;  
 This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet  
 Sits smiling to my heart: in grace whereof,  
 No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-  
 day,

But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell:  
 And the king's rouse the heavens shall bruit  
 again,

Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

[*Exeunt* KING, QUEEN, Lords, &c., POLO-  
 NIUS, and LAERTES.]

*Ham.* O, that this too too solid flesh would  
 melt,



130 Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!  
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd  
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God!  
O God!

How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable  
Seem to me all the uses of this world!  
Fie on't! O fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,  
That grows to seed; things rank and gross  
in nature [this!

Possess it merely. That it should come to  
But two months dead!—nay, not so much,  
not two;

So excellent a king; that was, to this,  
140 Hyperion to a satyr: so loving to my mother  
That he might not beteem the winds of  
heaven [earth!  
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and  
Must I remember? Why, she would hang on  
him,

As if increase of appetite had grown  
By what it fed on: and yet, within a month,—  
Let me not think on't—Frailty, thy name is  
woman!—

A little month; or ere those shoes were old  
With which she follow'd my poor father's  
body,

Like Niobe, all tears;—why she, even she,—  
O heaven! a beast, that wants discourse of  
reason, [mine uncle,  
150 Would have mourn'd longer,—married with  
My father's brother, but no more like my  
father

Than I to Hercules: within a month;

Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears  
Had left the flushing in her gallèd eyes,  
She married :—O, most wicked speed, to post  
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets ;  
It is not nor it cannot come to good ;  
But break, my heart ; for I must hold my  
tongue.

*Enter* HORATIO, BERNARDO, and MARCELLUS.

*Hor.* Hail to your lordship !

*Ham.* I am glad to see you well :  
Horatio,—or I do forget myself. 160

*Hor.* The same, my lord, and your poor  
servant ever.

*Ham.* Sir, my good friend, I'll change that  
name with you. [ratio ?—  
And what make you from Wittenberg, Ho-  
Marcellus ?

*Mar.* My good lord,—

*Ham.* I am very glad to see you ; good  
even, sir,— [berg?  
But what, in faith, make you from Witten-

*Hor.* A truant disposition, good my lord.

*Ham.* I would not hear your enemy say  
so.

Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,  
To make it truster of your own report 170  
Against yourself : I know you are no truant.  
But what is your affair in Elsinore ?

We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.

*Hor.* My lord, I came to see your father's  
funeral.

*Ham.* I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student;

I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

*Hor.* Indeed, my lord, it followed hard upon.

*Ham.* Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral baked meats

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

180 *Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven*

*Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio!—*

*My father!—methinks I see my father.*

*Hor.* O, where, my lord?

*Ham.* In my mind's eye, Horatio.

*Hor.* I saw him once, he was a goodly king.

*Ham.* He was a man, take him for all in all,  
I shall not look upon his like again.

*Hor.* My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

*Ham.* Saw? who?

*Hor.* My lord, the king your father.

190 *Ham.* The king my father!

*Hor.* Season your admiration for a while  
With an attent ear; till I may deliver,  
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,  
This marvel to you.

*Ham.* For heaven's love, let me hear. ✓✓

*Hor.* Two nights together had these gentlemen,

Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,  
In the dead vast and middle of the night,  
Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your  
father,

Arm'd at all points, exactly, cap-à-pé,

Appears before them, and with solemn march 200  
Goes slow and stately by them: thrice he  
walk'd

By their oppress'd and fear-surprisèd eyes,  
Within his truncheon's length; whilst they,  
distill'd

Almost to jelly with the act of fear, [me  
Stand dumb and speak not to him. This to  
In dreadful secrecy impart they did;  
And I with them the third night kept the  
watch :

Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,  
Form of the thing, each word made true and  
good,

The apparition comes: I knew your father; 210  
These hands are not more like.

*Ham.* But where was this?

*Mar.* My lord, upon the platform where  
we watch'd.

*Ham.* Did you not speak to it?

*Hor.* My lord, I did:

But answer made it none: yet once, me-  
thought,

It lifted up its head, and did address

Itself to motion, like as it would speak:

But, even then, the morning cock crew loud,

And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,

And vanish'd from our sight.

*Ham.* 'Tis very strange.

*Hor.* As I do live, my honor'd lord, 'tis  
true;

And we did think it writ down in our duty  
To let you know of it. 220

*Ham.* Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.—

Hold you the watch to-night ?

*Mar., Ber.* We do, my lord.

*Ham.* Arm'd say you ?

*All.* Arm'd, my lord.

*Ham.* From top to toe ?

*All.* My lord, from head to foot.

*Ham.* Then saw you not his face ?

*Hor.* O, yes, my lord ; he wore his beaver up.

*Ham.* What, look'd he frowningly ?

230 *Hor.* A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.

*Ham.* Pale or red ?

*Hor.* Nay, very pale.

*Ham.* And fix'd his eyes upon you ?

*Hor.* Most constantly.

*Ham.* I would I had been there.

*Hor.* It would have much amazed you.

*Ham.* Very like, very like.—Stay'd it long ?

*Hor.* While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.

*Mar., Ber.* Longer, longer.

*Hor.* Not when I saw't.

*Ham.* His beard was grizzled ? no ?

*Hor.* It was, as I have seen it in his life,  
A sable silver'd.

240 *Ham.* I will watch to-night ;  
Perchance 'twill walk again.

*Hor.* I warrant it will.

*Ham.* If it assume my noble father's person,

I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape  
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,  
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,  
Let it be tenable in your silence still;  
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,  
Give it an understanding, but no tongue;  
I will requite your loves. So, fare ye well:  
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve, 250  
I'll visit you.

*All.* Our duty to your honor.

*Ham.* Your loves, as mine to you: farewell.

*[Exeunt HOR., MAR., and BER.]*

My father's spirit in arms! all is not well;  
I doubt some foul play: would the night  
were come! *[rise,*  
Till then sit still, my soul: foul deeds will  
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to  
men's eyes. *[Exit.]*

SCENE III.—*A Room in Polonius's House.*

*Enter LAERTES and OPHELIA.*

*Laer.* My necessities are embark'd; farewell:

And, sister, as the winds give benefit  
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,  
But let me hear from you.

*Oph.* Do you doubt that?

*Laer.* For Hamlet, and the trifling of his  
favor,  
Hold it a fashion and a toy in blood;

A violet in the youth of primy nature,  
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,  
The perfume and suppliance of a minute ;  
No more.

*Oph.* No more but so ?

*Laer.* Think it no more : 10

For nature, crescent, does not grow alone  
In thews and bulk ; but, as this temple waxes,  
The inward service of the mind and soul  
Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you  
now ;

And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch  
The virtue of his will : but you must fear,  
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his  
own ;

For he himself is subject to his birth :  
He may not, as unvalued persons do,  
Carve for himself ; for on his choice depends 20  
The safety and the health of the whole state ;  
And therefore must his choice be circum-  
scribed

Unto the voice and yielding of that body  
Whereof he is the head. Then if he says  
he loves you,

It fits your wisdom so far to believe it,  
As he in his particular act and place [ther  
May give his saying deed ; which is no fur-  
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.  
Then weigh what loss your honor may sus-  
tain,

If with too credent ear you list his songs. 30

Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister ;  
And keep within the rear of your affection,  
Out of the shot and danger of desire.  
The chariest maid is prodigal enough,  
If she unmask her beauty to the moon :  
Virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious strokes ;  
The canker galls the infants of the spring,  
Too oft before their buttons be disclosed ;  
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth, 40  
Contagious blastments are most imminent.  
Be wary then ; best safety lies in fear ;  
Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

*Oph.* I shall the effect of this good lesson  
keep, [brother,  
As watchman to my heart. But, good my  
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,  
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven ;  
Whiles, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,  
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads  
And recks not his own rede.

*Laer.* O, fear me not. 50  
I stay too long ;—but here my father comes.

*Enter* POLONIUS.

A double blessing is a double grace ;  
Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

*Pol.* Yet here, Laertes ! aboard, aboard,  
for shame ;  
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail  
And you are stay'd for. There, my blessing  
with thee !

, [Laying his hand on LAERTES' head.



And these few precepts in thy memory  
See thou character. Give thy thoughts no  
tongue,

- Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.  
60 Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.  
The friends thou hast, and their adoption  
tried,

Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;  
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment  
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledged comrade.

Beware

Of entrance to a quarrel: but, being in,  
Bear't that the opposèd may beware of thee.  
Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice:  
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy  
judgment.

- Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,  
70 But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy:  
For the apparel oft proclaims the man;  
And they in France of the best rank and  
station

Are most select and generous, chief in that.  
Neither a borrower nor a lender be:  
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,  
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.  
This above all,—to thine ownself be true;  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

- 80 Farewell; my blessing season this in thee!

*Laer.* Most humbly do I take my leave, my  
lord.

*Pol.* The time invites you; go, your ser-  
vants tend.

*Laer.* Farewell, Ophelia, and remember  
well

What I have said to you.

*Oph.* 'Tis in my memory lock'd,  
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

*Laer.* Farewell. [Exit.

*Pol.* What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to  
you?

*Oph.* So please you, something touching  
the lord Hamlet.

*Pol.* Marry, well bethought :

'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late 90  
Given private time to you : and you yourself  
Have of your audience been most free and  
bounteous :

If it be so, (as so 'tis put on me,  
And that in way of caution,) I must tell you  
You do not understand yourself so clearly  
As it behoves my daughter and your honor :  
What is between you ? give me up the truth.

*Oph.* He hath, my lord, of late made many  
tenders

Of his affection to me.

*Pol.* Affection ! pooh ! you speak like a  
green girl, 100

Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.

Do you believe his *tenders*, as you call them ?

*Oph.* I do not know, my lord, what I  
should think. [a baby,

*Pol.* Marry, I'll teach you : think yourself  
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,  
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself  
more dearly ;

Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,  
Running it thus,) you'll tender me a fool.

*Oph.* My lord, he hath importuned me with  
love

110 In honorable fashion.

*Pol.* Ay, *fashion* you may call it; go to,  
go to.

*Oph.* And hath given countenance to his  
speech, my lord,

With almost all the vows of heaven.

*Pol.* Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I  
do know

When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul  
Lends the tongue vows: these blazes, daughter,  
ter,

Giving more light than heat—extinct in both,  
Even in their promise, as it is a-making,—

You must not take for fire. From this time.  
Be somewhat scanter of your maiden pres-

120 ence;

Set your entreatments at a higher rate [let,  
Than a command to parley. For lord Ham-  
Believe so much in him, that he is young;  
And with a larger tether may he walk  
Than may be given you: in few, Ophelia,  
Do not believe his vows; for they are bro-  
kers;—

Not of that dye which their investments show,  
But mere implorators of unholy suits,  
Breathing like sanctified and pious bonds,

130 The better to beguile. This is for all,—

I would not, in plain terms, from this time  
forth,

Have you so slander any moment leisure,  
As to give words or talk with the lord Ham-  
let.

Look to't, I charge you; come your ways.

*Oph.* I shall obey, my lord. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*The Platform.*

*Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS.*

*Ham.* The air bites shrewdly. It is very cold.

*Hor.* It is a nipping and an eager air.

*Ham.* What hour now?

*Hor.* I think it lacks of twelve.

*Mar.* No, it is struck.

*Hor.* Indeed? I heard it not; it then draws near the season

Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

[*A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off, within.*]

What does this mean, my lord?

*Ham.* The king doth wake to-night and takes his rouse, [reels;  
Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring  
And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish  
down,

The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out  
The triumph of his pledge.

*Hor.* Is it a custom?

*Ham.* Ay, marry, is't:

But to my mind, though I am native here  
And to the manner born, it is a custom  
More honor'd in the breach than the ob-  
servance.

This heavy-headed revel east and west  
Makes us traduced and tax'd of other na-  
tions :

20 They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish  
Soil our addition ; and, indeed, it takes  
From our achievements, though perform'd at  
height,

The pith and marrow of our attribute.  
So, oft it chanches in particular men,  
That for some vicious mole of nature in them,  
As in their birth, (wherein they are not  
guilty,

Since nature cannot choose his origin,)  
By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,  
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of rea-  
son ;

Or by some habit that too much o'er-leavens  
The form of plausible manners ; that these  
30 men,

Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,  
Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,  
Their virtues else (be they as pure as grace,  
As infinite as man may undergo,)  
Shall in the general censure take corruption  
From that particular fault : the dram of e'il  
Doth all the noble substance ever dout,  
To his own scandal.

*Hor.*

Look, my lord, it comes.

*Enter Ghost.*

*Ham.* Angels and ministers of grace, de-  
fend us !—

40 Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd,

Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts  
from hell,

Be thy intents wicked or charitable,  
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape  
That I will speak to thee: I'll call thee  
Hamlet,

King, father, royal Dane : O, answer me.  
Let me not burst in ignorance ! but tell  
Why thy canonized bones, hearsed in death,  
Have burst their cerements ! why the sepul-  
chre,

Wherein we saw thee quietly in-urn'd,  
Hath oped his ponderous and marble jaws 50  
To cast thee up again ! What may this mean,  
That thou, dead corse, again in complète  
steel

Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,  
Making night hideous ; and we fools of nature,  
So horridly to shake our disposition, [souls ?  
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our  
Say, why is this ? wherefore ? what should we  
do ?

[Ghost beckons HAMLET.

*Hor.* It beckons you to go away with it,  
As if it some impartment did desire  
To you alone.

*Mar.* Look, with what courteous action 60  
It waves you to a more removed ground :  
But do not go with it.

*Hor.* No, by no means.

*Ham.* It will not speak ; then will I follow  
it.

*Hor.* Do not, my lord.

*Ham.* Why, what should be the fear ?

I do not set my life at a pin's fee;  
 And for my soul, what can it do to that,  
 Being a thing immortal as itself?  
 It waves me forth again;—I'll follow it.

*Hor.* What if it tempt you toward the  
 flood, my lord,

70 Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff,  
 That beetles o'er his base into the sea?  
 And there assume some other horrible form,  
 Which might deprive your sovereignty of rea-  
 son

And draw you into madness? think of it:  
 The very place puts toys of desperation,  
 Without more motive, into every brain  
 That looks so many fathoms to the sea  
 And hears it roar beneath.

*Ham.* It waves me still.—Go on, I'll follow  
 thee.

*Mar.* You shall not go, my lord.

*Ham.* Hold off your hands.

80 *Hor.* Be ruled, you shall not go.

*Ham.* My fate cries out,  
 And makes each petty artery in this body  
 As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.—

[*Ghost beckons.*  
 Still am I call'd;—unhand me, gentlemen;

[*Breaking from them.*  
 By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets  
 me:—

I say, away.—Go on, I'll follow thee.

[*Exeunt Ghost and HAMLET.*

*Hor.* He waxes desperate with imagina-  
 tion.

*Mar.* Let's follow ; 'tis not fit thus to obey him.

*Hor.* Have after.—To what issue will this come ?

*Mar.* Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

*Hor.* Heaven will direct it.

*Mar.* Nay, let's follow him.  
[*Exeunt.*

90

SCENE V.—*A more remote part of the Platform.*

*Enter Ghost and HAMLET.*

*Ham.* Where wilt thou lead me ? speak,  
I'll go no further.

*Ghost.* Mark me.

*Ham.* I will.

*Ghost.* My hour is almost come,  
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames  
Must render up myself.

*Ham.* Alas, poor ghost !

*Ghost.* Pity me not, but lend thy serious  
hearing  
To what I shall unfold.

*Ham.* Speak, I am bound to hear.

*Ghost.* So art thou to revenge, when thou  
shalt hear.

*Ham.* What ?

*Ghost.* I am thy father's spirit ;  
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night ;



And for the day confined to fast in fires,  
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature  
Are burnt and purged away. But that I am  
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,  
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word  
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young  
blood, . [spheres,  
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their  
Thy knotted and combinèd locks to part,  
(And each particular hair to stand on end,  
20 (Like quills upon the fretful porpentine ;  
But this eternal blazon must not be  
To ears of flesh and blood.—List, list, O  
list !—

If thou didst ever thy dear father love,—

*Ham.* O heaven !

*Ghost.* Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

### *Ham. Murder?*

*Ghost.* Murder most foul, as in the best it is ;

But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

*Ham.* Haste me to know't; that I, with wings as swift

30 As meditation or the thoughts of love,  
May sweep to my revenge.

*Ghost.*

*Ghost.* I find thee apt ;  
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed  
That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,  
Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Ham-  
let, hear ;

'Tis given out that, sleeping in my orchard,

A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of  
Denmark

Is by a forged process of my death  
Rankly abused: but know, thou noble  
youth,

The serpent that did sting thy father's life  
Now wears his crown.

40

*Ham.* O my prophetic soul! my uncle!

*Ghost.* Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate  
beast,

With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous  
gifts,

(O wicked wit and gifts, that have the  
power

So to seduce!) won to his shameful lust

The will of my most seeming-virtuous  
queen:

O Hamlet, what a falling-off was there!

From me, whose love was of that dignity

That it went hand in hand even with the  
vow

I made to her in marriage, and to decline

Upon a wretch, whose natural gifts were  
poor

To those of mine!

But soft! methinks I scent the morning  
air;

Brief let me be.—Sleeping within my or-  
chard,

My custom always in the afternoon,

Upon my sècure hour thy uncle stole,

With juice of cursèd hebenon in a vial,

And in the porches of my ears did pour

The leperous distilment ; whose effect  
Holds such an enmity with blood of man  
That swift as quicksilver it courses through  
50 The natural gates and alleys of the body ;  
And with a sudden vigor it doth posset  
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,  
The thin and wholesome blood : so did it  
mine ;

And a most instant tetter bark'd about,  
Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome  
crust,

All my smooth body.

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand,  
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dis-  
patch'd ;

Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,  
60 Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd :  
No reckoning made, but sent to my account  
With all my imperfections on my head.

*Ghost* ~~Ham.~~ O, horrible ! O, horrible ! most hor-  
rible !

*Ghost.* If thou hast nature in thee, bear it  
not.

But howsoever thou pursu'st this act,  
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive  
Against thy mother aught ; leave her to  
heaven

And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,  
To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at  
once !

70 The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,  
And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire :  
Adieu, adieu, adieu ! remember me. [*Exit.*

*Ham.* O all you host of heaven ! O earth !

What else ? [my heart ;

And shall I couple hell ?—O fie !—Hold, hold,

And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,

But bear me stiffly up !—Remember thee !

Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a  
seat

In this distracted globe. Remember thee !

Yea, from the table of my memory

I'll wipe away all trivial fond records, 80

All saws of books, all forms, all pressures  
past,

That youth and observation copied there ;

And thy commandment all alone shall live

Within the book and volume of my brain,

Unmix'd with baser matter : yes, by heav-  
en !

O most pernicious woman !

O villain, villain, smiling, damnèd villain !

My tables,—meet it is I set it down,

That one may smile and smile and be a  
villain ;

At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark ; 90  
[Writing.

So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word ;

It is *Adieu, adieu ! remember me.*

I have sworn't.

*Hor.* [within.] My lord, my lord,—

*Mar.* [within.] Lord Hamlet,—

*Hor.* [within.] Heaven secure him !

*Mar.* [within.] So be it !

*Hor.* [within.] Illo, ho, ho, my lord !

*Ham.* Hillo, ho, ho, boy ! come, bird, come.

*Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.*

100 *Mar.* How is't, my noble lord ?

*Hor.* What news, my lord ?

*Ham.* O wonderful !

*Hor.* Good my lord, tell it.

*Ham.* No ; you'll reveal it.

*Hor.* Not I, my lord, by heaven.

*Mar.* Nor I, my lord.

*Ham.* How say you then ; would heart of  
man once think it ?

But you'll be secret ?

*Hor., Mar.* Ay, by heaven, my lord.

*Ham.* There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all-  
Denmark

But he's an arrant knave.

*Hor.* There needs no ghost, my lord, come  
110 from the grave,

To tell us this.

*Ham.* Why, right ; you are i' the right ;  
And so, without more circumstance at all,  
I hold it fit that we shake hands, and part ;  
You, as your business and desire shall point  
you,—

For every man has business and desire,  
Such as it is,—and for mine own poor part,  
Look you, I'll go pray.

*Hor.* These are but wild and whirling  
words, my lord.

*Ham.* I'm sorry they offend you, heartily ;  
Yes, 'faith, heartily.

120 *Hor.* There's no offence, my lord.

*Ham.* Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is,  
*Horatio,* [here,  
 And much offence too. Touching this vision  
 It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you ;  
 For your desire to know what is between us,  
 O'ermaster it as you may. And now, good  
 friends,  
 As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,  
 Give me one poor request.

*Hor.* What is't, my lord? We will.

*Ham.* Never make known what you have seen to-night.

*Hor., Mar.* My lord, we will not.

*Ham.* Nay, but swear't. 130

*Hor.* In faith,  
My lord, not I.

*Mar.* Nor I, my lord, in faith.

*Ham.* Upon my sword.

*Mar.* We have sworn, my lord, already.

*Ham.* Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

*Ghost.* [*beneath.*] Swear.

*Ham.* Ha, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, truepenny? [large,—  
Come on,—you hear this fellow in the cel-  
Consent to swear.

*Hor.* Propose the oath, my lord.

*Ham.* Never to speak of this that you have  
seen,  
Swear by my sword.

*Ghost.* [*beneath.*] Swear. 140

*Ham.* *Hic et ubique?* then we'll shift our  
ground:—  
Come hither, gentlemen,

And lay your hands again upon my sword :  
Never to speak of this that you have heard,  
Swear by my sword.

*Ghost.* [*beneath.*] Swear.

*Ham.* Well said, old mole ! can'st work i'  
the ground so fast ? [friends.  
A worthy pioneer !—Once more remove, good

*Hor.* O day and night, but this is wondrous  
strange !

*Ham.* And therefore as a stranger give it  
150 welcome. [Horatio,

There are more things in heaven and earth,  
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

But come ;—

Here, as before, never, so help you mercy !

How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,

As I, perchance, hereafter shall think meet

To put an antic disposition on—

That you, at such times seeing me, never shall

With arms encumber'd thus, or this head-  
shake,

160 Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,

As *Well, well, we know ;—or, We could, an*  
*if we would ;—* [they might ;

Or *If we list to speak ;—or There be, an if*

Or such ambiguous giving out, to note

That you know aught of me :—this not to do,

So grace and mercy at your most need help  
you,

Swear.

*Ghost.* [*beneath.*] Swear.

*Ham.* Rest, rest, perturbed spirit ! [They  
swear.] So, gentlemen,

With all my love I do commend me to you :  
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is  
May do, to express his love and friending  
to you, [gether;  
God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in to-  
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.  
The time is out of joint ;—O cursèd spite,  
That ever I was born to set it right !—  
Nay, come, let's go together. [Exeunt.

ACT II.

**SCENE I.**—*A Room in Polonius's House.*

*Enter* POLONIUS *and* REYNALDO.

**GIVE** him this money and these notes, Reynaldo.

*Rey.* I will, my lord.

*Pol.* You shall do marvellous wise-  
good Reynaldo,

Before you visit him, to make inquiry  
Of his behavior.

*Rey.* My lord, I did intend it.

*Pol.* Marry, well said: very well said.

Look you, sir,

Inquire me first what Danskers are in Paris;  
And how, and who, what means, and where  
they keep, [ing

**What** company, at what expense; and find-



10 By this encompassment and drift of question  
That they do know my son, come you more  
nearer

Than your particular demands will touch it :  
Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge  
of him ;

As thus,—*I know his father, and his friends,  
And in part him*,—do you mark this, Reyn-  
naldo ?

*Rey.* Ay, very well, my lord.

*Pol.* *And in part him* ;—but, you may say,  
*not well :*

*But if 't be he I mean, he's very wild ;  
Addicted so and so ;* and there put on him  
What forgeries you please ; marry, none so  
20 rank

As may dishonor him ; take heed of that ;  
But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips  
As are companions noted and most known  
To youth and liberty.

*Rey.* As gaming, my lord.

*Pol.* Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing,  
quarrelling,

Fighting—you may go so far.

*Rey.* My lord, that would dishonor him.

*Pol.* 'Faith, no ; as you may season it in  
the charge.

You must not put another scandal on him,  
That he is open to incontinency ;  
That's not my meaning : but breathe his  
faults so quaintly

That they may seem the taints of liberty :

30 The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind ;

A savageness in unreclaimèd blood,  
Of general assault.

*Rey.* But, my good lord,—

*Pol.* Wherefore should you do this?

*Rey.* Ay, my lord,  
I would know that.

*Pol.* Marry, sir, here's my drift;  
And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant:  
You laying these slight sullies on my son,  
As 'twere a thing a little soil'd i' the work-  
ing,

Mark you,  
Your party in converse, him you would sound,  
Having ever seen, in the prenominate crimes 40  
The youth you breathe of guilty, be assured,  
He closes with you in this consequence;  
*Good sir*, or so; or *friend* or *gentleman*,—  
According to the phrase and the addition  
Of man and country.

*Rey.* Very good, my lord.

*Pol.* And then, sir, does he this,—he does—  
What was I about to say?  
By the mass, I was about to say something:—  
where did I leave?

*Rey.* At closes in the consequence.  
At *friend* or so, and *gentleman*. 50

*Pol.* At closes in the consequence,—ay,  
marry; [tleman;  
He closes with you thus:—*I know the gen-  
I saw him yesterday, or t'other day,  
Or then, or then; with such or such; and,  
as you say, [rouse;  
There was he gaming; there o'ertook in his*

*There falling out at tennis ; or so forth.—*

See you now ;

Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth ;

And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,

60 With windlaces, and with assays of bias,

By indirections find directions out ;

So, by my former lecture and advice, [not ?

Shall you my son. You have me, have you

*Rey.* My lord, I have.

*Pol.* God be wi' you ; fare you well.

*Rey.* Good my lord,—

*Pol.* Observe his inclination in yourself.

*Rey.* I shall, my lord.

*Pol.* And let him ply his music.

*Rey.* Well, my lord.

*Pol.* Farewell !— *Exit REYNALDO.*

*Enter OPHELIA.*

70 How now, Ophelia ? what's the matter ?

*Oph.* Alas, my lord, I have been so affrighted !

*Pol.* With what, in the name of heaven ?

*Oph.* My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,

Lord Hamlet,—with his doublet all unbrac'd ;

No hat upon his head ; his stockings foul'd,

Ungarter'd, and down-gyvèd to his ancle ;

Pale as his shirt ; his knees knocking each other ;

And with a look so piteous in purpòrt

As if he had been loosèd out of hell

To speak of horrors,—he comes before me. 80

*Pol.* Mad for thy love?

*Oph.* My lord, I do not know;  
But, truly, I do fear it.

*Pol.* What said he?

*Oph.* He took me by the wrist and held  
me hard;

Then goes he to the length of all his arm;  
And with his other hand thus o'er his brow,  
He falls to such perusal of my face,  
As he would draw it. Long time stay'd he so;  
At last,—a little shaking of mine arm, [down,—  
And thrice his head thus waving up and  
He raised a sigh so piteous and profound 90  
That it did seem to shatter all his bulk  
And end his being: that done, he lets me go:  
And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,  
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;  
For out o' doors he went without their help,  
And to the last bendèd their light on me.

*Pol.* Come, go with me; I will go seek the  
king.

This is the very ecstasy of love;  
Whose violent property fordoes itself,  
And leads the will to desperate undertakings 100  
As oft as any passion under heaven  
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry,—  
What, have you given him any hard words of  
late?

*Oph.* No, my good lord; but, as you did  
command,  
I did repel his letters and denied  
His access to me.

*Pol.* That hath made him mad.  
I am sorry that with better heed and judgment  
I had not quoted him: I fear'd he did but [trifle,  
And meant to wreck thee; but, beshrew my  
110 jealousy!  
By heaven, it is as proper to our age  
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions  
As it is common for the younger sort  
To lack discretion. Come, go we to the king:  
This must be known; which, being kept close,  
might move  
More grief to hide than hate to utter love.  
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in the Castle.*

*Enter* KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDEN-  
STERN, and Attendants.

*King.* Welcome, dear Rosencrantz, and  
Guildenstern!  
Moreover that we much did long to see you,  
The need we have to use you did provoke  
Our hasty sending. Something have you  
heard  
Of Hamlet's transformation; so I call it,  
Since not the exterior nor the inward man  
Resembles that it was. What it should be,  
More than his father's death, that thus hath  
put him  
So much from the understanding of himself,

I cannot dream of : I entreat you both, 10  
That, being of so young days brought up with  
him, [humor,  
And since so neighbor'd to his youth and  
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our  
court

Some little time : so by your companies  
To draw him on to pleasures ; and to gather  
So much as from occasions you may glean,  
Whether aught, to us unknown, afflicts him  
thus,

That, open'd, lies within our remedy.

*Queen.* Good gentlemen, he hath much  
talk'd of you ;

And sure I am two men there are not living 20  
To whom he more adheres. If it will please  
you

To show us so much gentry and good will  
As to expend your time with us awhile,  
For the supply and profit of our hope,  
Your visitation shall receive such thanks  
As fits a king's remembrance.

*Ros.* Both your majesties  
Might, by the sovereign power you have of  
us,

Put your dread pleasures more into command  
Than to entreaty.

*Guil.* But we both obey ;  
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent, 30  
To lay our services freely at your feet,  
To be commanded.

*King.* Thanks, Rosencrantz and gentle  
Guildenstern.

*Queen.* Thanks, Guildenstern and gentle  
Rosencrantz :

And I beseech you instantly to visit  
My too much changèd son.—Go, some of  
you,

And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

*Guil.* Heavens make our presence and our  
practices

Pleasant and helpful to him !

*Queen.* Ay, amen !

[*Exeunt ROS., GUIL., and some Attendants.*]

*Enter POLONIUS.*

*Pol.* The ambassadors from Norway, my  
40 good lord,  
Are joyfully return'd.

*King.* Thou still hast been the father of  
good news.

*Pol.* Have I, my lord? Assure you, my  
good liege,

I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,  
Both to my God and to my gracious king :  
And I do think (or else this brain of mine  
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure  
As it hath used to do) that I have found  
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

*King.* O, speak of that ; that do I long to  
50 hear.

*Pol.* Give first admittance to the ambassa-  
dors ;

My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.

*King.* Thyself do grace to them, and bring  
them in. [Exit POLONIUS.]

He tells me, my dear Gertrude, that he hath  
found [temper.  
The head and source of all your son's dis-  
*Queen*. I doubt it is no other but the  
main,— [riage.  
His father's death and our o'erhasty mar-  
*King*. Well, we shall sift him.—

*Re-enter* POLONIUS *with* VOLTIMAND *and* CORNELIUS.

Welcome, my good friends !  
Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway?

*Volt.* Most fair return of greetings and desires.

Upon our first, he sent out to suppress  
His nephew's levies, which to him appear'd  
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack ;  
But, better look'd into, he truly found  
It was against your highness : whereat  
grieved,—

That so his sickness, age, and impotence,  
Was falsely borne in hand,—sends out arrests  
On Fortinbras, which he, in brief, obeys ;  
Receives rebuke from Norway ; and, in fine,  
Makes vow before his uncle never more  
To give the assay of arms against your maj-  
esty.

Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,  
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual  
fee ;

And his commission to employ those soldiers,  
So levied as before, against the Polack :



With an entreaty, herein further shown,  
[*Gives a paper.*]

That it might please you to give quiet pass  
Through your dominions for this enterprise ;  
On such regards of safety and allowance  
As therein are set down.

80 *King.* It likes us well ;  
And at our more consider'd time we'll read,  
Answer, and think upon this business.  
Meantime we thank you for your well-took  
labor :

Go to your rest ; at night we'll feast together :  
Most welcome home !

[*Exeunt VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS.*]

*Pol.* This business is well ended.—  
My liege and madam, to expostulate  
What majesty should be, what duty is,  
Why day is day, night night, and time is time,  
Were nothing but to waste night, day, and  
time.

90 Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,  
And tediousness the limbs and outward flour-  
ishes,

I will be brief : your noble son is mad :  
Mad call I it : for, to define true madness,  
What is't but to be nothing else but mad ?  
But let that go.

*Queen.* More matter, with less art.

*Pol.* Madam, I swear I use no art at all.  
That he is mad, 'tis true : 'tis true 'tis pity ;  
And pity 'tis, 'tis true : a foolish figure ;  
But farewell it, for I will use no art.  
100 Mad let us grant him then : and now remains

That we find out the cause of this effect ;  
 Or rather say, the cause of this defect ;  
 For this effect defective comes by cause :  
 Thus it remains and the remainder thus.  
 Perpend.

I have a daughter ; have, while she is mine ;  
 Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,  
 Hath given me this : now gather and surmise.

[*Reads.*] —To the celestial and my soul's idol, the  
 most beautified Ophelia,—

That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase : *beautified* 110  
 is a vile phrase ; but you shall hear. Thus :

[*Reads.*] In her excellent white bosom, these, etc.

*Queen.* Came this from Hamlet to her ?

*Pol.* Good madam, stay awhile ; I will be  
 faithful.

[*Reads.*] Doubt thou the stars are fire ;  
                   Doubt that the sun doth move ;  
                   Doubt truth to be a liar ;  
                   But never doubt I love.

O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers ; I have not 120  
 art to reckon my groans ; but that I love thee best, O  
 most best, believe it. Adieu.

Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst  
 this machine is to him, HAMLET. ✓

This in obedience hath my daughter show'd  
 me :

And more above, hath his solicitings,  
 As they fell out by time, by means, and place,  
 All given to mine ear.

*King.* But how hath she  
Received his love ?

*Pol.* What do you think of me ?

*King.* As of a man faithful and honorable.

*Pol.* I would fain prove so. But what  
might you think,

130 When I had seen this hot love on the wing,  
(As I perceived it, I must tell you that,  
Before my daughter told me,) what might you  
Or my dear majesty your queen here think,  
If I had play'd the desk or table-book ;  
Or given my heart a winking, mute and  
dumb ;

Or look'd upon this love with idle sight ;  
What might you think ? No, I went round  
to work,

And my young mistress thus I did bespeak ;  
*Lord Hamlet is a prince out of thy star ;*

*This must not be :* and then I precepts gave  
140 her

That she should lock herself from his resort,  
Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.

Which done, she took the fruits of my ad-  
vice ;

And he, repuls'd, (a short tale to make,)

Fell into a sadness ; then into a fast ;

Thence to a watch ; thence into a weakness ;

Thence to a lightness ; and, by this declen-  
sion,

Into the madness wherein now he raves

And all we mourn for.

*King.* Do you think 'tis this ?

150 *Queen.* It may be ; very likely.

*Pol.* Hath there been such a time (I'd fain know that)  
That I have positively said, 'Tis so,  
When it proved otherwise?

*King.* Not that I know.

*Pol.* Take this from this, if this be otherwise : [*Pointing to his head and shoulder.*]

If circumstances lead me, I will find  
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed  
Within the centre.

*King.* How may we try it further?

*Pol.* You know, sometimes he walks for  
hours together  
Here in the lobby.

*Queen.* So he does, indeed.

*Pol.* At such a time I'll loose my daughter 160  
to him ;

Be you and I behind an arras then ;  
Mark the encounter : if he love her not,  
And be not from his reason fallen thereon,  
Let me be no assistant for a state,  
But keep a farm and carters.

*King.* We will try it.

*Queen.* But look where sadly the poor  
wretch comes reading.

*Enter HAMLET, reading.*

*Pol.* Away, I do beseech you, both away ;  
I'll board him presently : — O, give me  
leave. —

[*Exeunt KING, QUEEN, and Attendants.*]

How does my good lord Hamlet?

*Ham.* Well, God-'a-mercy.

*Pol.* Do you know me, my lord ?

*Ham.* Excellent well ; you're a fish-monger.

*Pol.* Not I, my lord.

*Ham.* Then I would you were so honest a man.

*Pol.* Honest, my lord ?

*Ham.* Ay, sir ; to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

*Pol.* That's very true, my lord.

*Ham.* For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a good kissing carrion,—  
180 Have you a daughter ?

*Pol.* I have, my lord. [*Aside.*] Still harping on my daughter:—yet he knew me not at first ; he said I was a fishmonger : he is far gone, far gone : and truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love ; very near this. I'll speak to him again.—What do you read, my lord ?

*Ham.* Words, words, words.

*Pol.* What is the matter, my lord ?

*Ham.* Between who ?

*Pol.* I mean the matter that you read, my lord.

190 *Ham.* Slanders, sir : for the satirical rogue says here that old men have gray beards ; that their faces are wrinkled ; their eyes purg-

ing thick amber and plum-tree gum ; and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams : all which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down ; for you yourself, sir, should be old as I am, if, like a crab, you could go backward.

*Pol.* [*aside.*] Though this be madness, yet there is method in it.—Will you walk out of the air, my lord ?

*Ham.* Into my grave ?

*Pol.* Indeed, that is out of the air.—  
[*Aside.*] How pregnant sometimes his replies 200  
are ! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter.—My honorable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

*Ham.* You cannot, sir, take from me anything that I will more willingly part withal ; except my life, except my life, except my life.

*Pol.* Fare you well, my lord.

*Ham.* These tedious old fools !

210

*Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

*Pol.* You go to seek the lord Hamlet ;  
there he is.

*Ros.* [*to POLONIUS.*] God save you, sir !

[*Exit POLONIUS.*]

*Guil.* Mine honored lord !—

*Ros.* My most dear lord !

*Ham.* My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both?

*Ros.* As the indifferent children of the earth.

*Guil.* Happy, in that we are not over-  
happy;  
On Fortune's cap we are not the very button.

220 *Ham.* Nor the soles of her shoe?

*Ros.* Neither, my lord.

*Ham.* Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favors? What's the news?

*Ros.* None, my lord; but that the world's grown honest.

*Ham.* Then is doomsday near; but your news is not true. Let me question more in particular: what have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of Fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

*Guil.* Prison, my lord?

230 *Ham.* Denmark's a prison.

*Ros.* Then is the world one.

*Ham.* A goodly one; in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons; Denmark being one of the worst.

*Ros.* We think not so, my lord.

*Ham.* Why, then, 'tis none to you: for there is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so: to me it is a prison.

*Ros.* Why, then your ambition makes it one; 'tis too narrow for your mind.

*Ham.* O, I could be bounded in a nut shell and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams. 240

*Guil.* Which dreams, indeed, are ambition; for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream.

*Ham.* A dream itself is but a shadow.

*Ros.* Truly; and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality that it is but a shadow's shadow.

*Ham.* Then are our beggars bodies; and our monarchs and outstretched heroes the beggars' shadows. Shall we to the court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

*Ros., Guil.,* We'll wait upon you.

*Ham.* No such matter; I will not sort you 250 with the rest of my servants; for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended. But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?

*Ros.* To visit you, my lord: no other occasion.

*Ham.* Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you: and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear, a half-penny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come; deal justly with me: come, come; nay, speak.

*Guil.* What should we say, my lord? 260

*Ham.* Why, anything, but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of



confession in your looks which your modesties have not craft enough to color : I know the good king and queen have sent for you.

*Ros.* To what end, my lord ?

*Ham.* That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me,  
270 whether you were sent for or no ?

*Ros.* [*to* GUILDENSTERN.] What say you ?

*Ham.* [*aside.*] Nay, then, I have an eye of you.—If you love me, hold not off.

*Guil.* My lord, we were sent for.

*Ham.* I will tell you why ; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late (but wherefore I know not) lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises : and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly  
280 frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory ; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you,—this brave o’erhanging firmament—this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapors. What a piece of work is man ! How noble in reason ! how infinite in faculty ! in form and moving how express and admirable ! in action how like an angel ! in apprehension how like a god ! the beauty of the world ! the

paragon of animals ! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust ? man delights not me ; no, nor woman neither ; though by your smiling you seem to say so.

*Ros.* My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

*Ham.* Why did you laugh then, when I said, *man delights not me* ? 290

*Ros.* To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you : we coted them on the way ; and hither are they coming to offer you service.

*Ham.* He that plays the king shall be welcome ; his majesty shall have tribute of me : the adventurous knight shall use his foil and target : the lover shall not sigh gratis ; the humorous man shall end his part in peace : the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickle o' the sere ; and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't.—What players are they ? 300

*Ros.* Even those you were wont to take such delight in, the tragedians of the city.

*Ham.* How chances it they travel ? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

*Ros.* I think their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.

*Ham.* Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city ? Are they so followed ? 10

*Ros.* No, indeed, they are not.

*Ham.* How comes it? Do they grow rusty?

*Ros.* Nay, their endeavor keeps in the wonted pace: but there is, sir, an aery of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapped for't: these are now the fashion; and so be-rattle the common stages (so they call them,) that many, wearing rapiers, are afraid of goose-quills, and dare scarce come thither.

320 *Ham.* What, are they children? who maintains them? how are they escoted? Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players, (as it is most like, if their means are no better,) their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession?

*Ros.* 'Faith, there has been much to-do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin to tarre them to controversy: there was for a while no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

330 *Ham.* Is't possible?

*Guil.* O, there has been much throwing about of brains.

*Ham.* Do the boys carry it away?

*Ros.* Ay, that they do, my lord: Hercules and his load too.

*Ham.* It is not very strange; for mine uncle is king of Denmark; and those that would make mows at him while my father lived,

give twenty, forty, an hundred ducats apiece, for his picture in little. There is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out. [*Flourish of trumpets within.*]

*Guil.* There are the players.

*Ham.* Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. 340  
Your hands, come: the appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony: let me comply with you in this garb; lest my extent to the players, which, I tell you, must show fairly outward, should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome: but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.

*Guil.* In what, my dear lord?

*Ham.* I am but mad north-north-west; when the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a hernsaw.

*Enter* POLONIUS.

*Pol.* Well be with you, gentlemen!

*Ham.* Hark you, Guildenstern,—and you 350  
too;—at each ear a hearer; that great baby you see there is not yet out of his swathing-clouts.

*Ros.* Happily he's the second time come to them; for they say an old man is twice a child.

*Ham.* I will prophesy he comes to tell me of the players; mark it.—You say right, sir; o' Monday morning; 'twas so, indeed.

*Pol.* My lord, I have news to tell you.

*Ham.* My lord, I have news to tell you.  
360 When Roscius was an actor in Rome,—

*Pol.* The actors are come hither, my lord.

*Ham.* Buz, buz!

*Pol.* Upon mine honor,—

*Ham.* Then came each actor on his ass,—

*Pol.* The best actors in the world, either  
for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pas-  
toral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-  
historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral,  
scene indivisible, or poem unlimited: Seneca  
cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light.  
For the law of writ and the liberty, these are  
370 the only men.

*Ham.* O Jephthah, judge of Israel,—what  
a treasure hadst thou!

*Pol.* What treasure had he, my lord?

*Ham.* Why—

One fair daughter, and no more,  
The which he loved passing well.

*Pol.* [*aside.*] Still on my daughter.

*Ham.* Am I not i' the right, old Jephthah?

*Pol.* If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I  
380 have a daughter that I love passing well.

*Ham.* Nay, that follows not.

*Pol.* What follows then, my lord?

*Ham.* Why,

As by lot, God wot,  
and then you know,

It came to pass, as most like it was.

The first row of the pious chanson will show you more : for look, where my abridgment comes.

*Enter four or five Players.*

You're welcome, masters ; welcome, all :—I am glad to see ye well ;—welcome, good friends.—O, my old friend ! Thy face is val-  
anced since I saw thee last ; com'st thou to 390  
beard me in Denmark ?—What ! my young lady and mistress ! By-'r-lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine. Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring.—Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en to't like French falconers, fly at anything we see : we'll have a speech straight : come, give us a taste of your quality ; come, a passionate speech.

I *Play*. What speech, my lord ?

*Ham.* I heard thee speak me a speech 400  
once,—but it was never acted ; or, if it was, not above once ; for the play, I remember, pleased not the million ; 'twas caviare to the general : but it was (as I received it, and others, whose judgments in such matters cried in the top of mine) an excellent play : well digested in the scenes ; set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember, one said there were no sallets in the lines, to make the matter savory ; nor no matter in the phrase that might indict the author of affectation ; but called it an honest method, as

wholesome as sweet, and by very much more  
handsome than fine. One speech in it I  
410 chiefly loved : 'twas Æneas' tale to Dido ;  
and thereabout of it especially, where he  
speaks of Priam's slaughter ; if it live in your  
memory, begin at this line ; let me see, let me  
see ;—

The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast,

—it is not so ; it begins with Pyrrhus :—

420 The rugged Pyrrhus,—he, whose sable arms,  
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble  
When he lay couchèd in the ominous horse,—  
Hath now this dread and black complexion smear'd  
With heraldry more dismal : head to foot  
Now is he total gules ; horridly trick'd  
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons ;  
Baked and impasted with the parching streets,  
That lend a tyrannous and damnèd light  
To their lord's murder : roasted in wrath and fire,  
And thus o'er-sizèd with coagulate gore,  
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus  
Old grandsire Priam seeks.

So proceed you.

430 *Pol.* 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken ; with  
good accent and good discretion.

1 *Play.* Anon he finds him  
Striking too short at Greeks ; his antique sword,  
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,  
Repugnant to command : unequal match'd,  
Pyrrhus at Priam drives ; in rage strikes wide ;  
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword  
The unnervèd father falls. Then senseless Ilium,  
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top

Stoops to his base ; and with a hideous crash 440  
 Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear : for, lo ! his sword,  
 Which was declining on the milky head  
 Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' the air to stick :  
 So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood ;  
 And, like a neutral to his will and matter,  
 Did nothing.  
 But, as we often see, against some storm,  
 A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,  
 The bold wind speechless, and the orb below  
 As hush as death : anon the dreadful thunder 450  
 Doth rend the region : so, after Pyrrhus' pause,  
 Aroused vengeance sets him new a-work ;  
 And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall  
 On Mars's armor, forged for proof eterne,  
 With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword  
 Now falls on Priam.—  
 Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune ! All you gods,  
 In general synod, take away her power ;  
 Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,  
 And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven, 460  
 As low as to the fiends !

*Pol.* This is too long.

*Ham.* It shall to the barber's, with your beard.—Pr'ythee, say on : he's for a jig or a tale, or he sleeps :—say on ; come to Hecuba.

1 *Play.* But who, O who, had seen the mobled queen—

~~*Ham.* The mobled queen ?~~

*Pol.* That's good : *mobled queen* is good.

2 *Play.* Run barefoot up and down, threatening the  
 flame  
 With bisson rheum ; a clout about that head, 470  
 Where late the diadem stood ; and, for a robe,



About her lank and all o'er-teem'd loins,  
 A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up;—  
 Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd  
 'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pronounced :

480 But if the gods themselves did see her then,  
 When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport  
 In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,  
 The instant burst of clamor that she made,  
 (Unless things mortal move them not at all)  
 Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven,  
 And passion in the gods.

*Pol.* Look, whether he has not turned his color and has tears in his eyes.—Pray you, no more. ✓✓

*Ham.* 'Tis well; I'll have thee speak out the rest soon.—Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed? Do you hear, let them be well used; for they are the abstracts and brief chronicles of the time: after your death you were better have a bad epitaph than their ill report while you lived.

*Pol.* My lord, I will use them according to 490 their desert.

*Ham.* Odd's bodikins, man, much better: use every man after his desert, and who should 'scape whipping? Use them after your own honor and dignity: the less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

*Pol.* Come, sirs.

*Ham.* Follow him, friends: we'll hear a play to-morrow. [*Exit POL., with some of the Players.*—[*Aside to 1 Player.*] Dost thou

hear me, old friend ; can you play *The Murder of Gonzago* ?

*I Play.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* [*aside.*] We'll have't to-morrow 500  
night. You could, for a need, study a speech  
of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would  
set down and insert in't, could you not ?

*I Play.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* [*aside.*] Very well. — Follow' that  
lord ; and look you mock him not. [*Exit*  
*Player.*] My good friends [*to Ros. and*  
*GUIL.*], I'll leave you till night : you are wel-  
come to Elsinore.

*Ros.* Good my lord !

*Ham.* Ay, so, God be wi' you :

[*Exeunt ROSEN. and GUILD*

Now I am alone.

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I ! 510

Is it not monstrous, that this player here,

But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,

Could force his soul so to his own conceit

That from her working all his visage wann'd ;

'Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,

A broken voice, and his whole function suit-

ing

[ing !

With forms to his conceit ? And all for noth-

For Hecuba !

What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,

That he should weep for her ? What would

he do,

520

Had he the motive and the cue for passion

That I have ? He would drown the stage

with tears

And cleave the general ear with horrid  
speech ;

Make mad the guilty and appal the free,  
Confound the ignorant, and amaze, indeed,  
The very faculties of eyes and ears. Yet I,  
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,  
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,  
And can say nothing ; no, not for a king

530 Upon whose property, and most dear life,  
A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward ?  
Who calls me villain ? breaks my pate across ?  
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face ?  
Tweaks me by the nose ? gives me the lie i'  
the throat,

As deep as to the lungs ? Who does me this ?  
Ha !

'Swounds, I should take it : for it cannot be,  
But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall  
To make oppression bitter ; or, ere this,  
I should have fatted all the region kites  
With this slave's offal : bloody, bloody vil-  
lain !

540 Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless  
villain !

O, vengeance !

Why, what an ass am I ! this is most  
brave ;

That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,  
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,  
Must fall a-cursing, like a very trull,  
A scullion !

Fie upon't ! foh ! About, my brain ! I have  
heard



## ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the Castle.*

*Enter* KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

*King.*

**A**ND can you, by no drift of circumstance, [confusion  
Get from him why he puts on this  
Grating so harshly all his days of  
quiet

With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

*Ros.* He does confess he feels himself distracted; [speak.

But from what cause he will by no means

*Guil.* Nor do we find him forward to be  
sounded;

But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof, [sion  
When we would bring him on to some confession  
Of his true state.

to *Queen.* Did he receive you well?

*Ros.* Most like a gentleman.

*Guil.* But with much forcing of his disposition.

*Ros.* Most free of question; but of our demands

Niggard in his reply.

*Queen.* Did you assay him to any pastime?

*Ros.* Madam, it so fell out that certain  
players [him,

We o'er-raught on the way : of these we told  
And there did seem in him a kind of joy  
To hear of it : they are about the court,  
And, as I think, they have already order 20,  
This night to play before him.

*Pol.* 'Tis most true :  
And he beseech'd me to entreat your majes-  
ties

To hear and see the matter.

*King.* With all my heart ; and it doth much  
content me,  
To hear him so inclined.

Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,  
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

*Ros.* We shall, my lord.

[*Exeunt* ROSEN. and GUILD.

*King.* Sweet Gertrude, leave us too :  
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither ;  
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here 30  
Affront Ophelia.

Her father and myself (lawful espials)  
Will so bestow ourselves that, seeing, un-  
seen,

We may of their encounter frankly judge ;  
And gather by him, as he is behaved,  
If 't be the affliction of his love or no  
That thus he suffers for.

*Queen.* I shall obey you :  
And for your part, Ophelia, I do wish  
That your good beauty be the happy cause

Of Hamlet's wildness ; so shall I hope your  
virtues  
Will bring him to his wonted way again, 40  
To both your honors.

*Oph.* Madam, I wish it may.

[*Exit Queen.*]

*Pol.* Ophelia, walk you here.—Gracious,  
so please you, [Read on this book,  
We will bestow ourselves.—[*To Ophelia.*]  
That show of such an exercise may color  
Your loneliness. We are oft to blame in  
this,— [visage  
'Tis too much proved,—that, with devotion's  
And pious action we do sugar o'er  
The devil himself.

*King.* [*aside.*] O, 'tis too true ! 50  
How smart a lash that speech doth give my  
conscience ! [art,  
The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastering  
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it  
Than is my deed to my most painted word :  
O heavy burden !

*Pol.* I hear him coming ; let's withdraw,  
my lord. [*Exeunt KING and POLONIUS.*]

*Enter HAMLET.*

*Ham.* To be, or not to be,—that is the  
question :  
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer  
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,  
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,  
And, by opposing, end them ?—To die,—to  
sleep,—

No more ; and by a sleep to say we end  
The heartache and the thousand natural  
shocks

60

That flesh is heir to,—'tis a consummation  
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die,—to sleep ;—  
To sleep ! perchance to dream ;—ay, there's  
the rub ;

[come

For in that sleep of death what dreams may  
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil  
Must give us pause : there's the respect  
That makes calamity of so long life :

For who would bear the whips and scorns of  
time,

[tumely,

The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's con-  
The pangs of disprized love, the law's delay,  
The insolence of office, and the spurns

70

That patient merit of the unworthy takes,  
When he himself might his quietus make  
With a bare bodkin ? who would fardels  
bear,

To grunt and sweat under a weary life ;—  
But that the dread of something after death,  
The undiscover'd country from whose bourn  
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,  
And makes us rather bear those ills we have  
Than fly to others that we know not of ?

80

Thus conscience does make cowards of us  
all ;

And thus the native hue of resolution  
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought ;  
And enterprises of great pith and moment  
With this regard their currents turn awry,  
And lose the name of action.—Soft you now !



The fair Ophelia !—Nymph, in thy orisons  
Be all my sins remember'd.

*Oph.* Good my lord,  
How does your honor for this many a day ?

*Ham.* I humbly thank you ; well, well,  
90 well.

*Oph.* My lord, I have remembrances of  
yours

That I have longèd long to re-deliver ;  
I pray you, now receive them.

*Ham.* No, not I ; I never gave you aught.

*Oph.* My honor'd lord, I know right well  
you did ; [composed  
And with them words of so sweet breath  
As made the things more rich : their perfume  
lost,  
Take these again ; for to the noble mind  
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove un-  
kind.

100 There, my lord.

*Ham.* Ha, ha ! are you honest ?

*Oph.* My lord ?

*Ham.* Are you fair ?

*Oph.* What means your lordship ?

*Ham.* That, if you be honest and fair,  
your honesty should admit no discourse to  
your beauty.

*Oph.* Could beauty, my lord, have better  
commerce than with honesty ?

*Ham.* Ay, truly ; for the power of beauty  
will sooner transform honesty from what it is  
110 than the force of honesty can translate beauty  
into his likeness : this was sometime a para-

dox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

*Oph.* Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

*Ham.* You should not have believed me: for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it: I loved you not.

*Oph.* I was the more deceived.

*Ham.* Get thee to a nunnery; I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things that it were better my mother had not borne me; I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my beck, than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between heaven and earth? We are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father? 120

*Oph.* At home, my lord.

*Ham.* Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool no where but in's own house. Farewell.

*Oph.* O, help him, you sweet heavens! 130

*Ham.* If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry: be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery, go; farewell. Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go; and quickly too. Farewell.

*Oph.* O heavenly powers, restore him !

*Ham.* I have heard of your paintings too,  
well enough. God hath given you one face,  
and you make yourselves another ; you jig,  
140 you amble, and you lisp, and nick-name God's  
creatures, and make your wantonness your  
ignorance : go to, I'll no more on't ; it hath  
made me mad. I say we will have no more  
marriages : those that are married already, all  
but one, shall live ; the rest shall keep as  
they are. To a nunnery, go. [*Exit.*]

*Oph.* O, what a noble mind is here o'er-  
thrown ! [tongue, sword :

The courtier's, scholar's, soldier's, eye,  
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,  
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,  
The observed of all observers ! quite, quite,  
down !

150 And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,  
That suck'd the honey of his music vows,  
Now see that noble and most sovereign rea-  
son, [harsh ;  
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and  
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown  
youth  
Blasted with ecstasy : O, woe is me, [see !  
To have seen what I have seen, see what I

•  
*Re-enter KING and POLONIUS.*

*King.* Love ! his affections do not that  
way tend ; [little,  
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a

Was not like madness. There's something in  
his soul,

O'er which his melancholy sits on brood; 160

And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose

Will be some danger : which for to prevent,

I have in quick determination

Thus set it down : he shall with speed to Eng-  
land

For the demand of our neglected tribute :

Haply, the seas and countries different

With variable objects shall expel

This something-settled matter in his heart,

Whereon his brains still beating puts him  
thus [on't?

From fashion of himself. What think you 170

*Pol.* It shall do well ; but yet do I believe

The origin and commencement of his grief

Sprung from neglected love.—How now,

Ophelia,

You need not tell us what lord Hamlet said ;

We heard it all.—My lord, do as you please ;

But, if you hold it fit, after the play

Let his queen mother all alone entreat him

To show his grief ; let her be round with  
him ;

And I'll be placed, so please you, in the ear

Of all their conference. If she find him not, 180

To England send him : or confine him  
where

Your wisdom best shall think.

*King.*

It shall be so :

Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd  
go. [Exeunt.

SCENE II.—*A Hall in the same.*

*Enter HAMLET and certain Players.*

*Ham.* Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue: but, if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus: but use all gently: for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) the whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings; who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but in-  
10 explicable dumb-shows and noise: I could have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant; it out-herods Herod: pray you, avoid it.

*I Play.* I warrant your honor.

*Ham.* Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature; for anything so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn  
20 her own image, and the very age and body of

the time his form and pressure. Now, this overdone or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of the which one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that neither having the accent of Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of Nature's journeymen had made men and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

I *Play*. I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us, sir. 3C

*Ham*. O, reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns, speak no more than is set down for them: for there be of them that will themselves laugh to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though in the mean time some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villanous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready. [*Exeunt Players*.]

*Enter* POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

How now, my lord! will the king hear this piece of work? 40

*Pol*. And the queen too, and that presently.

*Ham*. Bid the players make haste. [*Exit*

POLONIUS.] Will you two help to hasten them?

*Both.* We will, my lord.

[*Exeunt* ROSEN. and GUILD.

*Ham.* What, ho! Horatio!

*Enter* HORATIO.

*Hor.* Here, sweet lord, at your service.

*Ham.* Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man  
As e'er my conversation coped withal.

*Hor.* O, my dear lord,—

*Ham.* Nay, do not think I flatter :  
For what advancement may I hope from  
50 thee

That no revénue hast but thy good spirits  
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the  
poor be flatter'd?

No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,  
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee  
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou  
hear?

Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice  
And could of men distinguish, her election  
Hath seal'd thee for herself: for thou hast  
been

As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing ;  
60 A man that fortune's buffets and rewards  
Hast ta'en with equal thanks: and blest are  
those [mingled

Whose blood and judgment are so well co-  
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger  
To sound what stop she please. Give me that  
man [him

That is not passion's slave, and I will wear

In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,  
As I do thee.—Something too much of  
this.—

There is a play to-night before the king,  
One scene of it comes near the circumstance  
Which I have told thee of my father's death. 70  
I pr'ythee, when thou see'st that act a-foot,  
Even with the very comment of my soul  
Observe mine uncle : if his occulted guilt  
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,  
It is a damnèd ghost that we have seen,  
And my imaginations are as foul  
As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note :  
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face ;  
And after we will both our judgments join  
In censure of his seeming.

*Hor.* Well, my lord : 80  
If he steal aught the whilst this play is play-  
ing,  
And 'scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

*Ham.* They are coming to the play ; I  
must be idle :  
Get you a place.

*Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSEN-  
CRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and other Lords at-  
tendant, with the Guard carrying torches. Dan-  
ish march ; flourish.*

*King.* How fares our cousin Hamlet?

*Ham.* Excellent, i' faith ; of the chameleon's  
dish : I eat the air, promise-crammed : you  
cannot feed capons so.

*King.* I have nothing with this answer,  
Hamlet ; these words are not mine.



*Ham.* No, nor mine now. [*To POLONIUS.*]  
90 My lord, you played once in the university,  
you say?

*Pol.* That did I, my lord; and was accounted a good actor.

*Ham.* And what did you enact?

*Pol.* I did enact Julius Cæsar: I was killed i' the Capitol: Brutus killed me.

*Ham.* It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there.—Be the players ready?

*Ros.* Ay, my lord: they stay upon your patience.

*Queen.* Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

*Ham.* No, good mother, here's metal more  
400 attractive.

*Pol.* [*to the KING.*] O ho! do you mark that?

\* \* \* \* \*

*Oph.* You are merry.

*Ham.* Who, I?

*Oph.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* O, your only jig-maker. What

should a man do but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within 's two hours. 110

*Oph.* Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

*Ham.* So long? Nay, then, let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sabell. O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year; but by-'r-lady, he must build churches then: or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse, whose epitaph is, *For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot.*

*Hautboys play. The dumb show enters.*

*Enter a King and a Queen, very lovingly; the Queen embracing him and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck: lays him down upon a bank of flowers; she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the King's ears, and exit. The Queen returns; finds the King dead, and makes passionate action. The Poisoner, with some two or three Mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The Poisoner woos the Queen with gifts; she seems loth and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his love. [Exeunt.*

*Oph.* What means this, my lord?

*Ham.* Marry, this is miching mallecho; it means mischief.

*Oph.* Belike, this show imports the argu-  
120 ment of the play.

*Enter Prologue.*

*Ham.* We shall know by this fellow : the  
players cannot keep counsel. They'll tell  
all.

*Oph.* Will he tell us what this show  
meant ?

*Ham.* Ay, or any show.

*Oph.* I'll mark the play.

*Pro.* For us, and for our tragedy,  
Here stooping to your clemency,  
We beg your hearing patiently.

*Ham.* Is this a prologue or the posy of a  
ring ?

130 *Oph.* 'Tis brief, my lord.

*Ham.* As woman's love.

*Enter two Players, King and Queen.*

*P. King.* Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart gone  
round

Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orbèd ground,  
And thirty dozen moons with borrow'd sheen  
About the world have times twelve thirties been,  
Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands  
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

*P. Queen.* So many journeys may the sun and  
moon

140 Make us again count o'er ere love be done !  
But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,  
So far from cheer and from your former state  
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,  
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must :

For woman's fear and love holds quantity ;  
 In neither aught, or in extremity.  
 Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know ;  
 And as my love is sized, my fear is so.  
 Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear ;  
 Where little fears grow great, great love grows  
 there.

*P. King.* 'Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly  
 too ;

150

My operant powers their functions leave to do :  
 And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,  
 Honor'd, beloved ; and haply, one as kind  
 For husband shalt thou——

*P. Queen.* O, confound the rest !

Such love must needs be treason in my breast :

In second husband let me be accurst !

None wed the second but who kill'd the first.

*Ham.* [*aside.*] Wormwood, wormwood.

*P. Queen.* The instances that second marriage  
 move

Are base respects of thrift, but none of love.

160

*P. King.* I do believe you think what now you  
 speak ;

But, what we do determine oft we break.

Purpose is but the slave to memory ;

Of violent birth, but poor validity :

Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree ;

But fall, unshaken, when they mellow be.

Most necessary 'tis that we forget

To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt ;

What to ourselves in passion we propose,

The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.

170

The violence of either grief or joy

Their own enactures with themselves destroy :

Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament,

Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.

This world is not for aye ; nor 'tis not strange

That even our loves should with our fortunes  
change ;  
For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,  
Whether love lead fortune or else fortune love.  
The great man down, you mark his favorite flies ;  
180 The poor advanced makes friends of enemies.  
And hitherto doth love on fortune tend ;  
For who not needs shall never lack a friend ;  
And who in want a hollow friend doth try,  
Directly seasons him his enemy.  
But, orderly to end where I begun,—  
Our wills and fates do so contrary run,  
That our devices still are overthrown ; [own ;  
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our  
So think thou wilt no second husband wed ;  
190 But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead.  
*P. Queen.* Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven  
light !  
Sport and repose lock from me day and night !  
To desperation turn my trust and hope !  
An anch'ret's cheer in prison be my scope !  
Each opposite that blanks the face of joy  
Meet what I would have well and it destroy !  
Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,  
If, once a widow, ever I be wife ! ✓✓

*Ham.* [to OPHELIA.] If she should break  
it now,——

*P. King.* 'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here  
a while ;  
200 My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile  
The tedious day with sleep. [*Sleeps.*  
*P. Queen.* Sleep rock thy brain,  
And never come mischance between us twain.  
[*Exit.*

*Ham.* Madam, how like you this play ?  
*Queen.* The lady doth protest too much,  
methinks.

*Ham.* O, but she'll keep her word.

*King.* Have you heard the argument? Is there no offence in 't?

*Ham.* No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest; no offence i' the world.

*King.* What do you call the play? 210

*Ham.* The Mouse-trap. Marry, how? Tropically. This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna; Gonzago is the king's name; his wife, Baptista: you shall see anon; 'tis a knavish piece of work: but what of that? your majesty and we that have free souls, it touches us not: let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung.

*Enter* LUCIANUS.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

*Oph.* You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

*Ham.* I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying. 220

*Oph.* Still better, and worse.

*Ham.* Begin, murderer; leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come;—

—*The croaking raven  
Doth bellow for revenge.*

*Luc.* Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time  
agreeing ;  
Confederate season, else no creatures seeing ;  
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,  
With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,  
Thy natural magic and dire property,  
230 On wholesome life usurp immediately.  
*[Pours the poison into the sleeper's ear.]*

*Ham.* He poisons him i' the garden for  
his estate. His name's Gonzago ; the story  
is extant, and writ in choice Italian : you  
shall see anon how the murderer gets the  
love of Gonzago's wife.

*Oph.* The king rises.

*Ham.* What ! frightened with false fire !

*Queen.* How fares my lord ?

*Pol.* Give o'er the play.

*King.* Give me some light :—away !

*All.* Lights, lights, lights !

*[Exeunt all but HAMLET and HORATIO.]*

240 *Ham.* *Why, let the stricken deer go weep,  
The hart ungalled play ;  
For some must watch, while some  
must sleep ;  
So runs the world away.—*

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers,  
(if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with  
me) with two Provincial roses on my razed  
shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players,  
sir ?

*Hor.* Half a share.

*Ham.* A whole one, ay.

*For thou dost know, O Damon dear,  
This realm dismantled was* 250  
*Of Jove himself; and now reigns  
here*

*A very, very—Pajock. .*

*Hor.* You might have rhymed.

*Ham.* O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's  
word for a thousand pound. Didst per-  
ceive?

*Hor.* Very well, my lord.

*Ham.* Upon the talk of the poisoning,—

*Hor.* I did very well note him.

*Ham.* Ah, ha!—Come, some music! come,  
the recorders!

*For if the king like not the comedy,* 260  
*Why then, belike, he likes it not, perdy.*

Come, some music!

*Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

*Guil.* Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word  
with you.

*Ham.* Sir, a whole history.

*Guil.* The king, sir,—

*Ham.* Ay, sir, what of him?

*Guil.* Is in his retirement marvellous dis-  
tempered.

*Ham.* With drink, sir?

*Guil.* No, my lord, rather with choler.

*Ham.* Your wisdom should show itself 270  
more richer, to signify this to his doctor; for,  
for me to put him to his purgation, would  
perhaps plunge him into far more choler.

*Guil.* Good my lord, put your discourse



into some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair.

*Ham.* I am tame, sir : pronounce.

*Guil.* The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit hath sent me to you.

*Ham.* You are welcome.

*Guil.* Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you  
280 to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment : if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my business.

*Ham.* Sir, I cannot.

*Guil.* What, my lord ?

*Ham.* Make you a wholesome answer ; my wit's diseased : but, sir, such answer as I can make you shall command ; or rather, as you say, my mother : therefore no more, but to the matter ; my mother, you say,—

*Ros.* Then thus she says : your behavior hath struck her into amazement and admiration.  
290

*Ham.* O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother !—But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration ? Impart.

*Ros.* She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

*Ham.* We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us ?

*Ros.* My lord, you once did love me.

*Ham.* So I do still, by these pickers and stealers.

*Ros.* Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? you do surely bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to 300 your friend.

*Ham.* Sir, I lack advancement.

*Ros.* How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

*Ham.* Ay, sir, but *While the grass grows*, —the proverb is something musty.

*Re-enter Players with recorders.*

O, the recorders: let me see one.—To withdraw with you:—why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

*Guil.* O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, 310 my love is too unmannerly.

*Ham.* I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

*Guil.* My lord, I cannot.

*Ham.* I pray you.

*Guil.* Believe me, I cannot.

*Ham.* I do beseech you.

*Ros.* I know you touch of it, my lord.

*Ham.* 'Tis as easy as lying: govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse 320 most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

*Guil.* But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

*Ham.* Why, look you now, how unworthy

a thing you make of me. You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass: and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. S'blood! do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me.—

*Re-enter* POLONIUS.

God bless you, sir!

*Pol.* My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

*Ham.* Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in shape of a camel?

*Pol.* By the mass, and 'tis like a camel indeed.

*Ham.* Methinks it is like a weasel.

*Pol.* It is backed like a weasel.

*Ham.* Or, like a whale?

340 *Pol.* Very like a whale.

*Ham.* Then will I come to my mother by-and-by.—[*Aside.*] They fool me to the top of my bent.—I will come by-and-by.

*Pol.* I will say so.

*Ham.* By-and-by is easily said. [*Exit* POLONIUS.]—Leave me, friends.

[*Exeunt* ROS., GUIL., HOR., &c.]

'Tis now the very witching time of night,

When churchyards yawn, and hell itself  
breathes out [hot blood,  
Contagion to this world : now could I drink  
And do such bitter business as the day  
Would quake to look on. Soft ; now to my 350  
mother.—

O heart, lose not thy nature ; let not ever  
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom :  
Let me be cruel, not unnatural :  
I will speak daggers to her, but use none ;  
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites :  
How in my words soever she be shent,  
To give them seals never, my soul, consent !  
[Exit.

SCENE III.—*A Room in the same.*

*Enter KING, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.*

*King.* I like him not ; nor stands it safe  
with us [you ;  
To let his madness range. Therefore, prepare  
I your commission will forthwith dispatch,  
And he to England shall along with you :  
The terms of our estate may not endure  
Hazard so dangerous as doth hourly grow  
Out of his lunacies.

*Guil.* We will ourselves provide :  
Most holy and religious fear it is  
To keep those many many bodies safe,  
That live and feed upon your majesty.

*Ros.* The single and peculiar life is bound,  
With all the strength and armor of the mind,  
To keep itself from 'noyance ; but much more

10

That spirit upon whose weal depend and  
rest

The lives of many. The cease of majesty  
Dies not alone ; but like a gulf doth draw  
What's near it with it : it is a massy wheel,  
Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,  
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser  
things [falls,

20 Are mortis'd and adjoin'd ; which, when it  
Each small annexment, petty consequence,  
Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone  
Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.

*King.* Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy  
voyage ;

For we will fetters put upon this fear,  
Which now goes too free-footed.

*Ros., Guil.* We will haste us.  
*Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

*Enter POLONIUS.*

*Pol.* My lord, he's going to his mother's  
closet :

Behind the arras I'll convey myself  
To hear the process ; I'll warrant she'll tax  
him home.

30 And, as you said, and wisely was it said,  
'Tis meet that some more audience than a  
mother, [hear  
Since nature makes them partial, should o'er-  
The speech, of vantage. Fare you well, my  
liege,

I'll call upon you e'er you go to bed,  
And tell you what I know.

*King.*

Thanks, dear my lord.

[*Exit* POLONIUS.]

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven ;  
It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,  
A brother's murder !—Pray can I not,  
Though inclination be as sharp as will ;  
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent ; 40  
And, like a man to double business bound,  
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,  
And both neglect. What if this cursèd hand  
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,  
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heav-  
ens  
To wash it white as snow ? Whereto serves  
mercy  
But to confront the visage of offence ?  
And what's in prayer but this two-fold  
force,  
To be forestallèd ere we come to fall,  
Or pardon'd being down ? Then I'll look 50  
up ;  
My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer  
Can serve my turn ? *Forgive me my foul  
murder ?*  
That cannot be ; since I am still possess'd  
Of those effects for which I did the murder,—  
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.  
May one be pardon'd and retain the offence ?  
In the corrupted currents of this world,  
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice ;  
And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself  
Buys out the law : but 'tis not so above : 60  
There is no shuffling, there the action lies

In his true nature ; and we ourselves com-  
pell'd,  
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,  
To give in evidence. What then ? what  
rests ?

Try what repentance can : what can it not ?  
Yet what can it when one can not repent ?  
O wretched state ! O bosom black as death !  
O limèd soul that, struggling to be free,  
Art more engag'd ! Help, angels ! make  
assay ! [of steel,

70 Bow, stubborn knees ! and, heart with strings  
Be soft as sinews of the new born babe !  
All may be well ! [Retires, and kneels.

*Enter HAMLET.*

*Ham.* Now might I do it pat, now he is  
praying ; [en :  
And now I'll do't ;—and so he goes to heav-  
And so am I revenged ? That would be  
scann'd :

A villain kills my father ; and, for that,  
I, his sole son, do this same villain send  
To heaven.

O, this is hire and salary, not revenge.

He took my father grossly, full of bread ;  
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as  
80 May ; [heaven ?

And how his audit stands who knows save  
But in our circumstance and course of  
thought,

'Tis heavy with him : and am I then revenged,  
To take him in the purging of his soul,

When he is fit and season'd for his passage?  
No.

Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid  
    hent:

When he is drunk-asleep, or in his rage;

At gaming, swearing; or about some act

That has no relish of salvation in't:

Then trip him; that his heels may kick at  
    heaven;

And that his soul may be as damn'd, and

As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays: 90

This physic but prolongs thy sickly days.

[Exit.

*The KING rises and advances.*

*King.* My words fly up, my thoughts re-  
    main below;

Words without thoughts never to heaven go.

[Exit.

#### SCENE IV.—*Another Room in the same.*

*Enter QUEEN and POLONIUS.*

*Pol.* He will come straight. Look, you lay  
    home to him: [bear with;

Tell him his pranks have been too broad to  
And that your grace hath screen'd and stood  
    between [here.

Much heat and him. I'll 'sconce me even  
Pray you, be round with him.



*Ham.* [*within.*] Mother ! mother ! mother !

*Queen.* I'll warrant you ;

Fear me not :—withdraw, I hear him coming.

[*POLONIUS hides behind the arras.*]

*Enter HAMLET.*

*Ham.* Now, mother, what's the matter ?

*Queen.* Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

*Ham.* Mother, you have my father much  
10 offended.

*Queen.* Come, come, you answer me with  
an idle tongue.

*Ham.* Go, go, you question with a wicked  
tongue.

*Queen.* Why, how now, Hamlet ?

*Ham.* What's the matter now ?

*Queen.* Have you forgot me ?

*Ham.* No, by the rood, not so :  
You are the queen, your husband's brother's  
wife ; [mother.

And—would it were not so !—you are my

*Queen.* Nay, then I'll set those to you that  
can speak.

*Ham.* Come, come, and sit you down ; you  
shall not budge ;

You go not till I set you up a glass

20 Where you may see the inmost part of you.

*Queen.* What wilt thou do ? thou wilt not  
murder me ?

Help, help, ho !

*Pol.* [*behind.*] What, ho ! help ! help !  
help !

*Ham.* How now ; a rat ? [*Draws.*  
Dead, for a ducat, dead.

[*HAMLET makes a pass through the arras.*

*Pol.* [*behind.*] O, I am slain.  
[*Falls and dies.*

*Queen.* O me, what hast thou done ?

*Ham.* Nay, I know not :  
Is it the king ?

[*Lifts up the arras, and draws forth POLONIUS.*

*Queen.* O, what a rash and bloody deed is  
this !

*Ham.* A bloody deed ! — almost as bad  
good mother,  
As kill a king, and marry with his brother, 30

*Queen.* As kill a king !

*Ham.* Ay, lady, 'twas my word.—  
[*To POL.*] Thou wretched, rash, intruding  
fool, farewell !

I took thee for thy better ; take thy fortune :  
Thou find'st to be too busy is some dan  
ger.— [down,

Leave wringing of your hands : peace, sit you  
And let me wring your heart : for so I shall,  
If it be made of penetrable stuff ;  
If damnèd custom have not brazed it so  
That it is proof and bulwark against sense.

*Queen.* What have I done, that thou dar'st  
wag thy tongue 40  
In noise so rude against me ?

*Ham.* Such an act  
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty ;  
Calls virtue hypocrite ; takes off the rose  
From the fair forehead of an innocent love

And sets a blister there ; makes marriage-  
vows

As false as dicers' oaths : O, such a deed  
As from the body of contraction plucks  
The very soul, and sweet religion makes  
A rhapsody of words : heaven's face doth  
glow ;

- 50 Yea, this solidity and compound mass,  
With tristful visage, as against the doom,  
Is thought-sick at the act.

*Queen.* Ah me, what act,  
That roars so loud, and thunders in the in-  
dex ? [this ;—

- Ham.* Look here upon this picture and on  
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.  
See what a grace was seated on this brow :  
Hyperion's curls ; the front of Jove himself ;  
An eye like Mars, to threaten or command ;  
A station like the herald Mercury,  
60 New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill ;  
A combination and a form, indeed,  
Where every god did seem to set his seal  
To give the world assurance of a man :  
This was your husband.—Look you now,  
what follows :

Here is your husband ; like a mildew'd ear,  
Blasting his wholesome brother.—Have you  
eyes ?

Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,  
And batten on this moor ? Ha ! have you  
eyes ?

- You cannot call it love : for at your age  
70 The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,

And waits upon the judgment ; and what  
judgment

Would step from this to this? Sense, sure,  
you have,

Else could you not have motion : but sure  
that sense

Is apoplex'd : for madness would not err ;

Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd

But it reserved some quantity of choice,

To serve in such a difference. What devil  
was't

That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-  
blind?

Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,

Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans  
all,

80

Or but a sickly part of one true sense

Could not so mope.

O shame ! where is thy blush ? Rebellious  
hell,

If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,

To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,

And melt in her own fire : proclaim no shame

When the compulsive ardor gives the charge ;

Since frost itself as actively doth burn

And reason panders will.

*Queen.*

O Hamlet, speak no more :

Thou turnest mine eyes into my very soul ; 90

And there I see such black and grainèd  
spots

As will not leave their tinct.

*Ham.*

Nay, but to live  
Stew'd in corruption—

*Queen.* O, speak to me no more ;  
These words, like daggers, enter in mine  
ears ;

No more, sweet Hamlet !

*Ham.* A murderer and a villain :  
A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe  
Of your precedent lord :—a vice of kings ;  
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,  
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole  
And put it in his pocket !

100 *Queen.* No more !

*Ham.* A king of shreds and patches :—

*Enter Ghost.*

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,  
You heavenly guards !—What would your  
gracious figure ?

*Queen.* Alas ! he's mad.

*Ham.* Do you not come your tardy son to  
chide,  
That, laps'd in time and passion, lets go by  
The important acting of your dread com-  
mand ?

O, say !

*Ghost.* Do not forget: this visitation  
110 Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.  
But look ! amazement on thy mother sits :  
O, step between her and her fighting soul ;  
Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works :  
Speak to her, Hamlet.

*Ham.* How is it with you, lady ?

*Queen.* Alas, how is't with you,  
That you do bend your eye on vacancy,

And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?

Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;  
And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,  
Your bedded hair, like life in excrements, 120  
Starts up and stands on end. O gentle son,  
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper  
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you  
look?

*Ham.* On him! on him!—Look you, how  
pale he glares! [stones,  
His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to  
Would make them capable.—Do not look  
upon me;  
Lest with this piteous action you convert  
My stern effects: then what I have to do  
Will want true color; tears, perchance, for  
blood.

*Queen.* To whom do you speak this?

*Ham.* Do you see nothing there? 130

*Queen.* Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.

*Ham.* Nor did you nothing hear?

*Queen.* No, nothing but ourselves.

*Ham.* Why, look you there! look how it  
steals away!

My father, in his habit as he lived!

Look, where he goes, even now, out at the  
portal! [Exit Ghost.

*Queen.* This is the very coinage of your  
brain:

This bodiless creation ecstasy

Is very cunning in.

*Ham.* Ecstasy!

- My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep  
time, [ness  
140 And make as healthful music: it is not mad-  
That I have utter'd: bring me to the test,  
And I the matter will re-word; which mad-  
ness [grace,  
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of  
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,  
That not your trespass but my madness  
speaks:  
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place;  
Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,  
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;  
Repent what's past; avoid what is to come;  
150 And do not spread the compost on the weeds,  
To make them ranker.—[*Aside.*] Forgive me  
this my virtue:  
For in the fatness of these pury times  
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg;  
Yea, curb and woo for leave to do him good.  
*Queen.* O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart  
in twain.  
*Ham.* O, throw away the worser part of it,  
And live the purer with the other half.  
Good night: but go not to mine uncle's bed;  
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.  
That monster, custom, who all sense doth  
160 eat—  
Of habits evil, is angel yet in this,—  
That to the use of actions fair and good  
He likewise gives a frock, or livery,  
That aptly is put on. Refrain to-night:  
And that shall lend a kind of easiness

To the next abstinence : the next more  
easy ;

For use almost can change the stamp of na-  
ture,

And either shame the devil, or throw him  
out

With wondrous potency. Once more, good  
night :

And when you are desirous to be bless'd, 170

I'll blessing beg of you.—For this same  
lord, [Pointing to POLONIUS.

I do repent ; but heaven hath pleased it  
so,—

To punish me with this and this with me,  
That I must be their scourge and minister.

I will bestow him, and will answer well

The death I gave him. So again, good  
night !—

[Aside.] I must be cruel, only to be kind ;

Thus bad begins, and worse remains be-  
hind.—

One word more, good lady.

*Queen.*

What shall I do ?

*Ham.* Not this, by no means, that I bid  
you do : 180

Let the bloat king

Make you to ravel all this matter out,

That I essentially am not in madness,

But mad in craft. 'Twere good you let him  
know :

For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober,  
wise,



Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib,  
Such dear concernings hide? who would do  
so?

No, in despite of sense and secrecy,  
Unpeg the basket on the house's top,  
190 Let the birds fly; and like the famous ape,  
To try conclusions, in the basket creep  
And break your own neck down.

*Queen.* Be thou assured, if words be made  
of breath,  
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe  
What thou hast said to me.

*Ham.* I must to England; you know  
that?

*Queen.* Alack,  
I had forgot; 'tis so concluded on.

*Ham.* There's letters seal'd: and my two  
schoolfellows,—  
Whom I will trust as I will adders fang'd,—  
They bear the mandate; they must sweep  
200 my way,

And marshal me to knavery. Let it work,  
For 'tis the sport to have the engineer  
Hoist with his own petar: and 't shall go  
hard,

But I will delve one yard below their mines,  
And blow them at the moon. O, 'tis most  
sweet,

When in one line two crafts directly meet.  
This man shall set me packing.

Mother, good night.—Indeed, this counsellor  
Is now most still, most secret, and most  
grave,

Who was in life a foolish prating knave. 210  
 Come, sir, to draw toward an end with  
 you :—  
 Good night, mother.

[*Exeunt severally ; HAMLET dragging the  
 body of POLONIUS.*]

## ACT IV.

### SCENE I.—*A Room in the Castle.*

*Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUIL-  
 DENSTERN.*

*King.*

**T**HERE'S matter in these sighs, these  
 profound heaves ;  
 You must translate : 'tis fit we un-  
 derstand them :

Where is your son ? [while.

*Queen.* Bestow this place on us a little

[*Exeunt ROS. and GUIL.*

Ah, my good lord, what have I seen to-night !

*King.* What, Gertrude ? How does Ham-  
 let ?

*Queen.* Mad as the sea and wind, when  
 both contend

Which is the mightier : in his lawless fit,  
 Behind the arras hearing something stir,  
 He whips his rapier out, and cries *A rat ! a* 10  
*rat !*

And in this brainish apprehension kills  
 The unseen good old man.

*King.*

O heavy deed !

It had been so with us, had we been there ;  
His liberty is full of threats to all ;  
To you yourself, to us, to every one.  
Alas ! how shall this bloody deed be answer'd ?

It will be laid to us, whose providence  
Should have kept short, restrain'd, and out  
of haunt [love,  
This mad young man : but so much was our  
20 We would not understand what was most fit ;  
But, like the owner of a foul disease,  
To keep it from divulging, let it feed  
Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone ?  
*Queen.* To draw apart the body he hath  
kill'd :

O'er whom his very madness, like some ore  
Among a mineral of metals base,  
Shows itself pure ; he weeps for what is done.

*King.* O Gertrude, come away !  
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,  
But we will ship him hence : and this vile  
30 deed  
We must, with all our majesty and skill,  
Both countenance and excuse.—Ho ! Guildenstern !

*Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

Friends both, go join you with some further  
aid :

Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,  
And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd  
him ; [body  
Go, seek him out ; speak fair, and bring the

Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.—

[*Exeunt Ros. and GUIL.*

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends ; [do,

And let them know, both what we mean to  
And what's untimely done : so, haply, stand—

40

Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,  
As level as the cannon to his blank, [name,  
Transports his poison'd shot,—may miss our  
And hit the woundless air. O, come away !  
My soul is full of discord and dismay.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Another Room in the same.*

*Enter HAMLET.*

*Ham.* —Safely stowed.

[*Ros., &c., within.* Hamlet ! lord Hamlet !]

*Ham.* What noise ? who calls on Hamlet ?  
O, here they come.

*Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

*Ros.* What have you done, my lord, with  
the dead body ?

*Ham.* Compounded it with dust, whereto  
'tis kin.

*Ros.* Tell us where 'tis ; that we may take  
it thence

And bear it to the chapel.

*Ham.* Do not believe it.

*Ros.* Believe what ?

10

*Ham.* That I can keep your counsel and not mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge!—what replication should be made by the son of a king?

*Ros.* Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

*Ham.* Ay, sir; that soaks up the king's countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best service in the end: he keeps them, as an ape doth nuts, in the corner of his jaw; first mouthed, to be last swallowed: when he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.

20 *Ros.* I understand you not, my lord.

*Ham.* I am glad of it: a knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

*Ros.* My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the king.

*Ham.* The body is with the king, but the king is not with the body. The king is a thing—

*Guil.* A thing, my lord?

*Ham.* Of nothing: bring me to him. Hide fox, and all after. [*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE III.—*Another Room in the same.*

*Enter KING, attended.*

*King.* I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.

How dangerous is it that this man goes loose;  
Yet must not we put the strong law on him:

He's loved of the distracted multitude,  
 Who like not in their judgment, but their  
 eyes; [weigh'd,  
 And where 'tis so, the offender's scourge is  
 But never the offence. To bear all smooth  
 and even,  
 This sudden sending him away must seem  
 Deliberate pause : diseases desperate grown  
 By desperate appliance are relieved,  
 Or not at all.—

10

*Enter ROSENCRANTZ.*

How now ? what hath befallen ?

*Ros.* Where the dead body is bestow'd, my  
 lord,

We cannot get from him.

*King.* But where is he ?

*Ros.* Without, my lord ; guarded, to know  
 your pleasure.

*King.* Bring him before us.

*Ros.* Ho, Guildenstern ! bring in my lord.

*Enter HAMLET and GUILDENSTERN.*

*King.* Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius ?

*Ham.* At supper.

*King.* At supper ? Where ?

*Ham.* Not where he eats, but where he is  
 eaten : a certain convocation of politic worms  
 are e'en at him. Your worm is your only  
 emperor for diet : we fat all creatures else  
 to fat us ; and we fat ourselves for maggots :  
 your fat king and your lean beggar is but

20

variable service ; two dishes but to one table ;  
that's the end.

*King.* Alas, alas !

*Ham.* A man may fish with the worm that  
hath eat of a king ; and eat of the fish that  
hath fed of that worm. }

*King.* What dost thou mean by this ?

*Ham.* Nothing, but to show you how a  
30 king may go a progress through a beggar.

*King.* Where is Polonius ?

*Ham.* In heaven ; send thither to see : if  
your messenger find him not there, seek him  
i' the other place yourself. But, indeed, if you  
find him not within this month, you shall nose  
him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

*King.* Go seek him there.

[To some Attendants.

*Ham.* He will stay till ye come.

[Exeunt Attendants.

*King.* Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial  
safety,

40 Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve  
For that which thou hast done, must send  
thee hence

With fiery quickness : therefore, prepare thy-  
self ;

The bark is ready and the wind at help,  
The associates tend, and everything is bent  
For England.

*Ham.* For England ?

*King.* Ay, Hamlet.

*Ham.* Good.

*King.* So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

*Ham.* I see a cherub that sees them.—  
But come; for England!—Farewell, dear  
mother.

*King.* Thy loving father, Hamlet.

*Ham.* My mother: father and mother is  
man and wife; man and wife is one flesh; 50  
and so, my mother.—Come, for England.

[*Exit.*

*King.* Follow him at foot; tempt him with  
speed aboard;

Delay it not, I'll have him hence to-night:

Away; for everything is seal'd and done

That else leans on the affair: pray you, make  
haste. [Exeunt ROS. and GUIL.

And, England, if my love thou hold'st at  
aught,

(As my great power thereof may give thee  
sense;

Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red

After the Danish sword, and thy free awe

Pays homage to us) thou may'st not coldly  
set 60

Our sovereign process; which imports at  
full,

By letters conjuring to that effect,

The present death of Hamlet. Do it, Eng-  
land;

For like the hectic in my blood he rages,

And thou must cure me: till I know 'tis  
done,

Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun.

[*Exit.*



✓ ✓

SCENE IV.—*A Plain in Denmark.**Enter FORTINBRAS, and Forces, marching.**For.* [to an Officer.] Go, captain, from me  
greet the Danish king;Tell him that, by his license, Fortinbras  
Claims the conveyance of a promised march  
Over his kingdom. You know the rendez-  
vous.If that his majesty would aught with us,  
We shall express our duty in his eye,  
And let him know so.*Cap.* I will do't, my lord.*For.* Go softly on.[*Exeunt FORTINBRAS and Forces.*]*Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, &c**Ham.* Good sir, whose powers are these?10 *Cap.* They are of Norway, sir.*Ham.* How purposed, sir,

I pray you?

*Cap.* Against some part of Poland.*Ham.* Who

Commands them, sir?

*Cap.* The nephew to old Norway, Fortin-  
bras.*Ham.* Goes it against the main of Poland,  
sir,

Or for some frontier?

*Cap.* Truly to speak, and with no addition,  
We go to gain a little patch of ground

That hath in it no profit but the name.  
To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it; 20  
Nor will it yield to Norway or the Pole  
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

*Ham.* Why, then the Polack never will defend it.

*Cap.* Yes, 'tis already garrison'd.

*Ham.* Two thousand souls and twenty thousand ducats

Will not debate the question of this straw;  
This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace, [without

That inward breaks, and shows no cause  
Why the man dies.—I humbly thank you, sir.

*Cap.* God be wi' you, sir. [*Exit.*

*Ros.* Will't please you go, my lord? 30

*Ham.* I will be with you straight. Go a little before. [*Exeunt Ros. and GUIL.*

How all occasions do inform against me,  
And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,  
If his chief good and market of his time  
Be but to sleep and feed? a beast, no more.  
Sure, he that made us with such large discourse,

Looking before and after, gave us not  
That capability and godlike reason  
To fust in us unused. Now, whether it be  
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple 40  
Of thinking too precisely on the event,—  
A thought, which, quarter'd, hath but one  
part wisdom

And ever three parts coward,—I do not know  
Why yet I live to say, *This thing's to do* :

Sith I have cause and will and strength and  
means

To do't. Examples gross as earth exhort  
me.

Witness this army of such mass and charge  
Led by a delicate and tender prince ;  
Whose spirit, with divine ambition puff'd,  
50 Makes mouths at the invisible event ;  
Exposing what is mortal and unsure  
To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,  
Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great  
Is not to stir without great argument,  
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw  
When honor's at the stake. How stand I  
then

That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,  
Excitements of my reason and my blood,  
And let all sleep ? while to my shame I see  
60 The imminent death of twenty thousand men,  
That, for a fantasy and trick of fame,  
Go to their graves like beds ; fight for a  
plot

Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,  
Which is not tomb enough and continent  
To hide the slain ?—O, from this time forth,  
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth !  
[Exit.

SCENE V.—Elsinore. *A Room in the  
Castle.*

*Enter QUEEN and HORATIO.*

*Queen.* I will not speak with her.

*Hor.* She is importunate ; indeed, distract ;  
Her mood will needs be pitied.

*Queen.* What would she have ?

*Hor.* She speaks much of her father ; says  
she hears  
There's tricks i' the world ; and hems, and  
beats her heart ;  
Spurns enviously at straws ; speaks things in  
doubt,  
That carry but half sense ; her speech is  
nothing,  
Yet the unshapèd use of it doth move  
The hearers to collection ; they aim at it,  
And botch the words up fit to their own  
thoughts ;  
Which, as her winks and nods and gestures  
yield them,  
Indeed would make one think there would be  
thought,  
Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.  
'Twere good she were spoken with ; for she  
may strew

Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.

*Queen.* Let her come in. [*Exit HORATIO.*]  
To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,  
Each toy seems prologue to some great  
amiss :

So full of artless jealousy is guilt,  
It spills itself, in fearing to be spilt.

*Re-enter HORATIO with OPHELIA.*

*Oph.* Where is the beauteous majesty o.  
Denmark ?

*Queen.* How now, Ophelia?

*Oph.* [*sings.*]

How should I your true love know  
From another one?  
By his cockle-hat and staff  
And his sandal shoon.

*Queen.* Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?

*Oph.* Say you? nay, pray you, mark.

36 [*Sings.*] He is dead and gone, lady,  
He is dead and gone;  
At his head a grass green turf,  
At his heels a stone.

*Queen.* Nay, but, Ophelia,—

*Oph.* Pray you, mark.

[*Sings.*] White his shroud as the mountain snow,

*Enter KING.*

*Queen.* Alas, look here, my lord.

*Oph.* [*sings.*]

Larded with sweet flowers;  
Which bewept to the grave did go,  
With true love showers.

40 *King.* How do you, pretty lady?

*Oph.* Well, God 'ield you! They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table!

*King.* Conceit upon her father.

*Oph.* Pray you, let us have no words of this ; but when they ask you what it means, say you this :

[*Sings.*] To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,  
All in the morning betime,  
And I a maid at your window,  
To be your Valentine.

50

*King.* How long hath she been thus ?

*Oph.* I hope all will be well. We must be patient : but I cannot choose but weep, to think they should lay him i' the cold ground : my brother shall know of it, and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach ! Good night, ladies ; good night, sweet ladies ; good night, good night. [*Exit.*]

*King.* Follow her close ; give her good watch, I pray you. [*Exit* HORATIO.  
O ! this is the poison of deep grief ; it springs  
All from her father's death. O Gertrude,  
Gertrude,  
When sorrows come, they come not single spies,  
But in battalions ! First, her father slain ;  
Next, your son gone ; and he most violent  
author

60

Of his own just remove : the people muddied,  
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts  
and whispers,  
For good Polonius' death ; and we have done  
but greenly,  
In hugger-mugger to inter him : poor Ophelia  
Divided from herself and her fair judgment ;  
Without the which we are pictures, or mere  
beasts :  
Last, and as much containing as all these,  
70 Her brother is in secret come from France :  
Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,  
And wants not buzzers to infect his ear  
With pestilent speeches of his father's death ;  
Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,  
Will nothing stick our persons to arraign  
In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,  
Like to a murdering-piece, in many places  
Gives us superfluous death. [*A noise within.*  
*Queen.* Alack ! what noise is this ?  
*King.* Where are my Switzers ? Let them  
guard the door :

*Enter a Gentleman.*

What is the matter ?

80 *Gent.* Save yourself, my lord ;  
The ocean, overpeering of his list,  
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste  
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,  
O'erbears your officers. The rabble call him  
lord ;

And as the world were now but to begin,  
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,  
The ratifiers and props of every word,  
They cry, *Choose we; Laertes shall be king!*

Caps, hands, and tongues applaud it to the clouds,

*Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!* 90

*Queen.* How cheerfully on the false trail they cry!

O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs.

[*Noise within.*]

*King.* The doors are broke.

*Enter LAERTES, armed; Danes following.*

*Laer.* Where is the king?—Sirs, stand you all without.

*Dan.* No, let's come in.

*Laer.* I pray you, give me leave.

*Dan.* We will, we will.

[*They retire without the door.*]

*Laer.* I thank you:—keep the door.—O thou vile king,

Give me my father.

*Queen.* Calmly, good Laertes.

*Laer.* That drop of blood that's calm proclaims me bastard.

*King.* What is the cause, Laertes, That thy rebellion looks so giant-like? 100

Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person;

There's such divinity doth hedge a king



That treason can but peep to what it would,  
Acts little of his will. Tell me, Laertes,  
Why thou art thus incensed ;—let him go,  
Gertrude ;—

Speak, man.

*Laer.* Where is my father ?

*King.* Dead.

*Queen.* But not by him.

*King.* Let him demand his fill.

*Laer.* How came he dead ? I'll not be  
juggled with : [devil !

To hell, allegiance ! vows, to the blackest  
Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit !  
I dare damnation : to this point I stand,—

110 That both the worlds I give to negligence,  
Let come what comes ; only I'll be revenged  
Most thoroughly for my father.

*King.* Who shall stay you ?

*Laer.* My will, not all the world : [well,  
And for my means, I'll husband them so  
They shall go far with little.

*King.* Good Laertes,  
If you desire to know the certainty [revenge,  
Of your dear father's death, is't writ in your  
That, swoopstake, you will draw both friend  
and foe,

Winner and loser ?

*Laer.* None but his enemies.

*King.* Will you know them then ?

120 *Laer.* To his good friends thus wide I'll  
ope my arms ;  
And like the kind life-rendering pelican  
Repast them with my blood.

*King.* Why, now you speak  
Like a good child and a true gentleman.  
That I am guiltless of your father's death,  
And am most sensibly in grief for it,  
It shall as level to your judgment pierce,  
As day does to your eye.

*Danes.* [*within.*] Let her come in.

*Laer.* How now ! what noise is that ?—

*Enter OPHELIA.*

O heat, dry up my brains ! tears, seven times  
salt,

Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye !— 130  
By heaven, thy madness shall be paid by  
weight,

Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May !  
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia !—  
O heavens ! is't possible, a young maid's wits  
Should be as mortal as an old man's life ?  
Nature is fine in love : and where 'tis fine,  
It sends some precious instance of itself  
After the thing it loves.

*Oph.* [*sings.*]

They bore him barefaced on the bier ;  
Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny ;  
And on his grave rain'd many a tear ;

140

Fare you well, my dove !

*Laer.* Hadst thou thy wits, and didst per-  
suade revenge,  
It could not move me thus.

*Oph.* [*sings.*]

You must sing a-down a-down,  
An you call him a-down-a.

O, how the wheel becomes it ! It is the false steward, that stole his master's daughter.

*Laer.* This nothing's more than matter.

*Oph.* There's rosemary, that's for remembrance : pray, love, remember : and there is  
150 pansies, that's for thoughts.

*Laer.* A document in madness ; thoughts and remembrance fitted.

*Oph.* There's fennel for you, and columbines :—there's rue for you ; and here's some for me :—we may call it herb-o'-grace o' Sundays :—oh, you must wear your rue with a difference.—There's a daisy :—I would give you some violets ; but they withered all when my father died :—they say he made a good end,—

[*Sings.*] For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy,—

*Laer.* Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,

She turns to favor and to prettiness.

*Oph.* [*sings.*]

160

And will he not come again ?

And will he not come again ?

No, no, he is dead :

Go to thy death-bed,

He never will come again.

His beard was white as snow,

All flaxen was his poll :

He is gone, he is gone,

And we cast away moan ;

God ha' mercy on his soul !

And of all Christian souls, I pray God. God  
170 be wi' you !

[*Exit.*]

*Laer.* Do you see this, O God ?

*King.* Laertes, I must commune with your  
grief,  
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,  
Make choice of whom your wisest friends  
you will, [me :  
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and  
If by direct or by collateral hand [give,  
They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom  
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,  
To you in satisfaction ; but if not,  
Be you content to lend your patience to us, 180  
And we shall jointly labor with your soul  
To give it due content.

*Laer.* Let this be so ;  
His means of death, his obscure burial—  
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his  
bones,  
No noble rite, nor formal ostentation,—  
Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to  
earth,  
That I must call't in question.

*King.* So you shall ;  
And where the offence is, let the great axe  
fall.  
I pray you, go with me. [Exeunt.

SCENE VI.—*Another Room in the same.*

*Enter HORATIO and a Servant.*

*Hor.* What are they that would speak with  
me ?

*Serv.* Sailors, sir ;  
They say they have letters for you.

*Hor.*

Let them come in.

[*Exit* Servant.]

I do not know from what part of the world  
I should be greeted, if not from lord Hamlet.

*Enter* Sailors.*I Sail.* God bless you, sir.*Hor.* Let him bless thee too.

*I Sail.* He shall, sir, an't please him.  
There's a letter for you, sir; it comes from  
the ambassador that was bound for England;  
if your name be Horatio, as I am let to  
10 know it is.

*Hor.* [*reads.*]

*Horatio*, when thou shalt have overlooked this, give  
these fellows some means to the king; they have letters  
for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of  
very warlike appointment gave us chase. Finding our-  
selves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valor; in  
the grapple I boarded them; on the instant, they got  
clear of our ship; so I alone became their prisoner. They  
have dealt with me like thieves of mercy; but they knew  
what they did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let  
20 the king have the letters I have sent; and repair thou to  
me with as much speed as thou wouldst fly death. I  
have words to speak in thine ear will make thee dumb;  
yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter.  
These good fellows will bring thee where I am. *Rosen-  
crantz* and *Guildestern* hold their course for *England*;  
of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell.

He that thou knowest thine, HAMLET.

Come, I will make you way for these your  
letters;

And do't the speedier, that you may direct me  
To him from whom you brought them.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII.—*Another Room in the same**Enter KING and LAERTES.*

*King.* Now must your conscience my acquittance seal, [friend;  
And you must put me in your heart for  
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,  
That he which hath your noble father slain  
Pursued my life.

*Laer.* It well appears:—but tell me  
Why you proceeded not against these feats,  
So crimeful and so capital in nature,  
As by your safety, wisdom, all things else,  
You mainly were stirr'd up.

*King.* O, for two special reasons;  
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinew'd, [his mother, 10  
But yet to me they are strong. The queen,  
Lives almost by his looks; and for myself,  
(My virtue or my plague, be it either which,)  
She's so conjunctive to my life and soul  
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,  
I could not but by her. The other motive,  
Why to a public count I might not go,  
Is the great love the general gender bear  
him:

Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,  
Would, like the spring that turneth wood to  
stone, [rows, 20  
Convert his gyves to graces; so that my art-  
Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind,

Would have reverted to my bow again,  
And not where I had aim'd them.

*Laer.* And so have I a noble father lost;  
A sister driven into desperate terms;  
Whose worth, if praises may go back again,  
Stood challenger on mount of all the age  
For her perfections :—but my revenge will  
come.

30 *King.* Break not your sleeps for that : you  
must not think

That we are made of stuff so flat and dull  
That we can let our beard be shook with  
danger [more :

And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear  
I loved your father, and we love ourself;  
And that, I hope, will teach you to imag-  
ine,—

*Enter a Messenger.*

How now, what news ?

*Mess.* Letters, my lord, from Hamlet :  
This to your majesty ; this to the queen.

*King.* From Hamlet ! Who brought them ?

*Mess.* Sailors, my lord, they say : I saw  
them not. [ceived them

40 They were given me by Claudio, he re-  
Of him that brought them.

*King.* Laertes, you shall hear them :—  
Leave us. [Exit Messenger.

[*Reads.*] High and mighty You shall know I am set  
naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave  
to see your kingly eyes : when I shall, first asking your  
pardon thereunto, recount the occasion of my sudden  
and more strange return.

HAMLET.

What should this mean? Are all the rest  
come back?

Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

*Laer.* Know you the hand?

*King.* 'Tis Hamlet's character. *Naked,—* 50  
And in a postscript here he says *alone*:

Can you advise me? [come:

*Laer.* I am lost in it, my lord. But let him  
It warms the very sickness in my heart,  
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,  
*Thus didest thou.*

*King.* If it be so, Laertes,  
As how should it be so? how otherwise?  
Will you be ruled by me?

*Laer.* I will, my lord;  
So you will not o'er-rule me to a peace.

*King.* To thine own peace. If he be now  
return'd,— 60

As checking at his voyage, and that he means  
No more to undertake it,—I will work him  
To an exploit now ripe in my device,  
Under the which he shall not choose but  
fall; [breathe;

And for his death no wind of blame shall  
But even his mother shall uncharge the prac-  
tice,

And call it accident.

*Laer.* My lord, I will be ruled:  
The rather, if you could devise it so  
That I might be the organ.

*King.* It falls right.  
You have been talk'd of since your travel  
much, 70



And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality  
Wherein, they say, you shine : your sum of  
parts

Did not together pluck such envy from him  
As did that one ; and that, in my regard,  
Of the unworhiest siege.

*Laer.* What part is that, my lord ?

*King.* A very riband in the cap of youth,  
Yet needful too ; for youth no less becomes  
The light and careless livery that it wears  
Than settled age his sables and his weeds,  
Importing health and graveness. — Two

80 months since,

Here was a gentleman of Normandy,—  
I have seen myself, and served against, the  
French, [gallant  
And they can well on horseback : but this  
Had witchcraft in't ; he grew unto his seat ;  
And to such wondrous doing brought his  
horse,

As he had been incorps'd and demi-natured  
With the brave beast : so far he topp'd my  
thought

That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks,  
Come short of what he did.

*Laer.* A Norman, was't ?

90 *King.* A Norman.

*Laer.* Upon my life, Lamound.

*King.* The very same.

*Laer.* I know him well : he is the brooch,  
indeed,

And gem of all the nation.

*King.* He made confession of you ;

And gave you such a masterly report  
For art and exercise in your defence  
And for your rapier most especially,  
That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed,  
If one could match you; the scrimers of their  
nation,

He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye; 100  
If you opposed them. Sir, this report of his  
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy,  
That he could nothing do but wish and beg  
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.  
Now, out of this,——

*Laer.* What out of this, my lord?

*King.* Laertes, was your father dear to  
you?

Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,  
A face without a heart?

*Laer.* Why ask you this?

*King.* Not that I think you did not love  
your father;

But that I know love is begun by time; 110

And that I see, in passages of proof,

Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.

There lives within the very flame of love

A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it;

And nothing is at a like goodness still;

For goodness, growing to a plurisy,

Dies in his own too-much: that we would do

We should do when we would; for this *would*  
changes,

And hath abatements and delays as many.

As there are tongues, are hands, are acci-  
dents;

120

And then this *should* is like a spendthrift  
sigh,

That hurts by easing. But, to the quick o'  
the ulcer: [take

Hamlet comes back: 'what would you under-  
To show yourself your father's son in deed  
More than in words?

*Laer.* To cut his throat i' the church.

*King.* No place, indeed, should murder  
sanctuarize; [Laertes,

Revenge should have no bounds. But, good  
Will you do this, keep close within your  
chamber. [home:

Hamlet, return'd, shall know you are come  
We'll put on those shall praise your excel-  
lence,

130

And set a double varnish on the fame  
The Frenchman gave you; bring you, in fine,  
together,

And wager on your heads: he, being remiss,  
Most generous, and free from all contriving,  
Will not peruse the foils; so that with ease  
Or with a little shuffling you may choose  
A sword unbated, and in a pass of practice  
Requite him for your father.

*Laer.* I will do't:

And for that purpose I'll anoint my sword.  
I bought an unction of a mountebank,  
So mortal that but dip a knife in it,  
Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,  
Collected from all simples that have virtue  
Under the moon, can save the thing from  
death

That is but scratch'd withal : I'll touch my  
point

With this contagion, that, if I gall him  
slightly,

It may be death.

*King.* Let's further think of this ;  
Weigh what convenience both of time and  
means

May fit us to our shape : if this should fail,  
And that our drift look through our bad per-  
formance, [ject 150

'Twere better not assay'd ; therefore this pro-  
Should have a back or second that might  
hold, [see :—

If this should blast in proof. Soft ;—let me  
We'll make a solemn wager on your cun-  
nings—

I ha't.

When in your motion you are hot and dry,  
(As make your bouts more violent to that end,)  
And that he calls for drink, I'll have pre-  
pared him

A chalice for the nonce ; whereon but sipping,  
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck, 160  
Our purpose may hold there.

*Enter QUEEN.*

How now, sweet queen ?

*Queen.* One woe doth tread upon another's  
heel, [Laertes.  
So fast they follow :—your sister's drown'd,  
*Laer.* Drown'd !—O, where ?

- Queen.* There is a willow grows aslant a  
brook, [stream;  
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy  
There with fantastic garlands did she come  
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long  
purples,  
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,  
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers  
170 call them: [weeds  
There, on the pendent bows her coronet  
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke;  
When down her weedy trophies and herself  
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes  
spread wide;  
And mermaid-like awhile they bore her up:  
Which time she chanted snatches of old  
tunes;  
As one incapable of her own distress,  
Or like a creature native and indued  
Unto that element: but long it could not be,  
180 Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,  
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious  
lay  
To muddy death.
- Laer.* Alas then, is she drown'd?  
*Queen.* Drown'd, drown'd.  
*Laer.* Too much of water hast thou, poor  
Ophelia,  
And therefore I forbid my tears: but yet  
It is our trick; nature her custom holds,  
Let shame say what it will: when these are  
gone,  
The woman will be out.—Adieu, my lord!

I have a speech of fire that fain would blaze,  
But that this folly douts it. [Exit.

*King.* Let's follow, Gertrude;  
How much I had to do to calm his rage!  
Now fear I this will give it start again;  
Therefore let's follow. [Exeunt.

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ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Church-Yard.*

*Enter two Clowns, with spades, &c.*

*1 Clown.*

**I** she to be buried in Christian burial that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

*2 Clo.* I tell thee she is; and therefore make her grave straight: the crowner hath sat on her, and finds it Christian burial.

*1 Clo.* How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

*2 Clo.* Why, 'tis found so.

*1 Clo.* It must be *se offendendo*; it cannot be else. For here lies the point: if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act: and an act **10** hath three branches; it is to act, to do, and to perform: argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

2 *Clo.* Nay, but hear you, goodman deliver,—

1 *Clo.* Give me leave. Here lies the water; good: here stands the man; good: if the man go to this water and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes,—mark you that; but if the water come to him and drown him, he drowns not himself: argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life. ✓✓

20 2 *Clo.* But is this law?

1 *Clo.* Ay, marry, is't; crowner's-quest law.

2 *Clo.* Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out of Christian burial.

2 *Clo.* Why, there thou say'st: and the more pity that great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves more than their even Christian. Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers; they hold up Adam's profession.

30 2 *Clo.* Was he a gentleman?

1 *Clo.* He was the first that ever bore arms.

2 *Clo.* Why, he had none.

1 *Clo.* What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the scripture? The scripture says Adam digged; could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee: if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself—

2 *Clo.* Go to.

1 *Clo.* What is he that builds stronger

than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2 *Clo.* The gallows-maker; for that frame 40  
outlives a thousand tenants.

1 *Clo.* I like thy wit well, in good faith;  
the gallows does well: but how does it well?  
it does well to those that do ill: now thou  
dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger  
than the church; argal, the gallows may do  
well to thee. To't again; come.

2 *Clo.* Who builds stronger than a mason,  
a shipwright, or a carpenter?

1 *Clo.* Ay, tell me that and unyoke.

2 *Clo.* Marry, now I can tell. 50

1 *Clo.* To't.

2 *Clo.* Mass, I cannot tell.

*Enter HAMLET and HORATIO, at a distance.*

1 *Clo.* Cudgel thy brains no more about it:  
for your dull ass will not mend his pace with  
beating: and when you are asked this ques-  
tion next, say *a grave-maker*; the houses  
that he makes last till doomsday. Go, get  
thee to Yaughan; fetch me a stoup of liquor.

[*Exit* 2 *Clown.*]

1 *Clo.* [*digs, and sings.*]

In youth, when I did love, did love,

Methought, it was very sweet,

To contract, O, the time, for, ah, my behove, 60

O, methought there was nothing meet.

*Ham.* Hath this fellow no feeling of his  
business, that he sings at grave-making?



*Hor.* Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

*Ham.* 'Tis e'en so : the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

I *Clo.* [*sings.*]

70 But age, with his stealing steps,  
Hath caught me in his clutch,  
And hath shipped me intil the land,  
As if I had never been such.  
[*Throws up a skull.*]

*Ham.* That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once: how the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder ! It might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches ; one that would circumvent God, might it not ?

*Hor.* It might, my lord.

*Ham.* Or of a courtier ; which could say, *Good-morrow, sweet lord ! How dost thou, good lord ?* This might be my lord Such-a-one, that praised my lord Such-a-one's horse, 80 when he meant to beg it ; might it not ?

*Hor.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* Why, e'en so : and now my lady Worm's ; chapless, and knocked about the mazard with a sexton's spade : here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with 'em ? mine ache to think on't.

I *Clo.* [*sings.*]

A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,  
For and a shrouding sheet :  
O, a pit of clay for to be made  
For such a guest is meet.

90

[*Throws up another skull.*]

*Ham.* There's another! Why might not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits now, his quilllets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? Why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Hum! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries: is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, 100 than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box; and must the inheritor himself have no more? ha!

*Hor.* Not a jot more, my lord.

*Ham.* Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

*Hor.* Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins, too.

*Ham.* They are sheep and calves which seek out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow.—Whose grave's this, sirrah?

I *Clo.* Mine, sir.

110 [Sings.] O, a pit of clay for to be made  
For such a guest is meet.

*Ham.* I think it be thine, indeed ; for thou liest in't.

*I Clo.* You lie out on't, sir, and therefore it is not yours : for my part, I do not lie in't, and yet it is mine.

*Ham.* Thou dost lie in't, to be in't and say it is thine : 'tis for the dead, not for the quick ; therefore thou liest.

*I Clo.* 'Tis a quick lie, sir ; 'twill away again from me to you.

*Ham.* What man dost thou dig it for ?

120 *I Clo.* For no man, sir.

*Ham.* What woman, then ?

*I Clo.* For none neither.

*Ham.* Who is to be buried in't ?

*I Clo.* One that was a woman, sir ; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

*Ham.* How absolute the knave is ! we must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. By the lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it : the age is grown so pickèd, that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier he galls his kibe.—How long hast thou been a  
130 grave-maker ?

*I Clo.* Of all the days i' the year, I came to't that day that our last king Hamlet o'er-came Fortinbras.

*Ham.* How long is that since ?

*I Clo.* Cannot you tell that ? every fool

can tell that: it was the very day that young Hamlet was born: he that is mad, and sent into England.

*Ham.* Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

*I Clo.* Why, because he was mad; he shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, it's no great matter there.

*Ham.* Why?

149

*I Clo.* 'Twill not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.

*Ham.* How came he mad?

*I Clo.* Very strangely, they say.

*Ham.* How strangely?

*I Clo.* 'Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

*Ham.* Upon what ground?

*I Clo.* Why, here in Denmark. I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

*Ham.* How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot?

150

*I Clo.* 'Faith, if he be not rotten before he die he will last you some eight year or nine year: a tanner will last you nine year.

*Ham.* Why he more than another?

*I Clo.* Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore decayer of your dead body. Here's a skull now: this skull has lain in the earth three-and-twenty years.

*Ham.* Whose was it?

160

*1 Clo.* A mad fellow's it was; whose do you think it was?

*Ham.* Nay, I know not.

*1 Clo.* A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! 'a poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

*Ham.* This?

*1 Clo.* E'en that.

*Ham.* Let me see. [*Takes the skull.*]  
Alas, poor Yorick!—I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now how abhorred in 170  
my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chap-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favor she must come; make her laugh at that.—Pr'ythee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

*Hor.* What's that, my lord?

*Ham.* Dost thou think Alexander looked 180  
o' this fashion i' the earth?

*Hor.* E'en so.

*Ham.* And smelt so? puh!

[*Puts down the skull.*]

*Hor.* E'en so, my lord.

*Ham.* To what base uses we may return,  
Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the  
noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stop-  
ping a bung-hole?

*Hor.* 'Twere to consider too curiously, to  
consider so.

*Ham.* No, faith, not a jot; but to follow  
him thither with modesty enough, and likeli-  
hood to lead it: as thus; Alexander died, 190  
Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth  
into dust; the dust is earth; of earth we  
make loam: and why of that loam, whereto  
he was converted, might they not stop a beer-  
barrel?

Imperial Cæsar, dead and turn'd to clay,  
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:  
O, that that earth, which kept the world in awe,  
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!

But soft! but soft! aside:—here comes the  
king,

*Enter Priests, &c., in procession: the corpse of OPHE-  
LIA, LAERTES and Mourners following; KING,  
QUEEN, their Trains, &c.*

The queen, the courtiers: who is that they  
follow? [token  
And with such maimèd rites! This doth be- 200  
The corse they follow did with desperate  
hand

Fordo its own life. 'Twas of some estate:  
Couch we a while, and mark.

[Retiring with HORATIO.

*Laer.* What ceremony else ?

*Ham.* This is Laertes,

A very noble youth : mark.

*Laer.* What ceremony else ?

*I Priest.* Her obsequies have been as far  
enlarg'd [ful ;

As we have warrantise : her death was doubt-

And, but that great command o'ersways the  
order,

310 *She* should in ground unsanctified have lodged

Till the last trumpet ; for charitable prayers,

Shards, flints, and pebbles should be thrown  
on her,

Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants,

Her maiden strewments, and the bringing  
home

Of bell and burial.

*Laer.* Must there no more be done ?

*I Priest.* No more be done !

We should profane the service of the dead

To sing a requiem and such rest to her

As to peace-parted souls.

*Laer.* Lay her i' the earth ;

220 *And* from her fair and unpolluted flesh

May violets spring ! I tell thee, churlish  
priest,

A minist'ring angel shall my sister be,

When thou liest howling.

*Ham.* What, the fair Ophelia !

*Queen.* Sweets to the sweet : farewell.

[*Scattering flowers.*

I hoped thou shouldst have been my Ham-  
let's wife ;

I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd,  
sweet maid,

And not t' have strew'd thy grave.

*Laer.*

O, treble woe

Fall ten times treble on that cursèd head,

Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense

Deprived thee of!—Hold off the earth a

while,

[arms : 230

Till I have caught her once more in mine

[Leaps into the grave.

Now pile your dust upon the quick and

dead;

Till of this flat a mountain you have made,

To o'er-top old Pelion, or the skyish head

Of blue Olympus.

*Ham. [advancing.]* What is he whose  
grief

Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of  
sorrow

Conjures the wand'ring stars, and makes  
them stand

Like wonder-wounded hearers? this is I,

Hamlet the Dane.

[Leaps into the grave.

*Laer.*

The devil take thy soul. 240

[Grappling with him.

*Ham.* Thou pray'st not well.

I pr'ythee, take thy fingers from my throat;

For, though I am not splenitive and rash,

Yet have I something in me dangerous,

Which let thy wisdom fear: hold off thy hand.

*King.* Pluck them asunder.

*Queen.*

Hamlet, Hamlet!

*All.* Gentlemen,—



*Hor.* Good my lord, be quiet.  
[*The Attendants part them, and they come out of the grave.*]

*Ham.* Why, I will fight with him upon this theme,

Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

250 *Queen.* O my son! what theme?

*Ham.* I loved Ophelia; forty thousand brothers

Could not, with all their quantity of love,  
Make up my sum.—What wilt thou do for her?

*King.* O, he is mad, Laertes.

*Queen.* For love of God, forbear him.

*Ham.* Come, show me what thou'lt do:

Woo't weep! woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't  
tear thyself?

Woo't drink up eisel? eat a crocodile?

I'll do't.—Dost thou come here to whine?

260 To outface me with leaping in her grave?

Be buried quick with her, and so will I;

And, if thou prate of mountains, let them  
throw

Millions of acres on us; till our ground,

Singeing his pate against the burning zone,

Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou'lt  
mouth,

I'll rant as well as thou.

*Queen.* This is mere madness;  
And thus awhile the fit will work on him;  
Anon, as patient as the female dove,  
When that her golden couplets are disclosed,  
His silence will sit drooping.

*Ham.* Hear you, sir; 270  
What is the reason that you use me thus ?  
I loved you ever : but it is no matter ;  
Let Hercules himself do what he may,  
The cat will mew, and dog will have his day.  
[*Exit.*

*King.* I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him. [Exit HORATIO.]  
[*To LAERTES.*] Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech ;  
We'll put the matter to the present push.—  
Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.—  
This grave shall have a living monument :  
An hour of quiet shortly shall we see ; 280  
Till then, in patience our proceeding be.  
[*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II.—*A Hall in the Castle.*

*Enter HAMLET and HORATIO.*

*Ham.* So much for this, sir : now shall you see the other ;  
You do remember all the circumstance ?  
*Hor.* Remember it, my lord ?  
*Ham.* Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting, [lay  
That would not let me sleep : methought, I  
Worse than the mutines in the bilboes.  
Rashly,  
And praised be rashness for it,—let us know,  
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,

When our deep plots do pall ; and that should  
teach us

- 10 There's a divinity that shapes our ends,  
Rough-hew them how we will ;—

*Hor.* That is most certain.

*Ham.* Up from my cabin,

My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark  
•Groped I to find out them : had my desire ;  
Finger'd their packet ; and, in fine, withdrew  
To mine own room again : making so bold,  
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal  
Their grand commission ; where I found,  
Horatio,—

- 20 O royal knavery !—an exact command,  
Larded with many several sorts of reasons,  
Importing Denmark's health, and England's  
too,

With, ho ! such bugs and goblins in my life,  
That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,  
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,  
My head should be struck off.

*Hor.* Is't possible ?

*Ham.* Here's the commission ; read it at  
more leisure.

But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed ?

*Hor.* I beseech you.

*Ham.* Being thus be-netted round with vil-  
lanies,—

Ere I could make a prologue to my brains,  
They had begun the play,—I sat me down ;  
Devised a new commission ; wrote it fair ;—  
I once did hold it, as our statists do,  
A baseness to write fair, and labor'd much

How to forget that learning ; but, sir, now  
It did me yeoman's service :—wilt thou know  
The effect of what I wrote ?

*Hor.* Ay, good my lord.

*Ham.* An earnest conjuration from the  
king,

As England was his faithful tributary :  
As love between them like the palm should  
flourish ; [wear, 40

As peace should still her wheaten garland

And stand a comma 'tween their amities ;

And many such like *as's* of great charge,

That on the view and knowing of these con-  
tents,

Without debatement further, more or less,

He should the bearers put to sudden death,

Not shriving-time allow'd.

*Hor.* How was this seal'd ?

*Ham.* Why, even in that was heaven ordi-  
nant ;

I had my father's signet in my purse,  
Which was the model of that Danish seal : 50

Folded the writ up in form of the other ;

Subscrib'd it ; gave't the impression ; placed  
it safely, [day

The changeling never known. Now, the next

Was our sea-fight : and what to this was se-  
quent

Thou know'st already.

*Hor.* So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go  
to't.

*Ham.* Why, man, they did make love to  
this employment ;

They are not near my conscience ; their defeat

Does by their own insinuation grow :

60 'Tis dangerous, when the baser nature comes  
Between the pass and fell-incensèd points  
Of mighty opposites.

*Hor.* Why, what a king is this ?

*Ham.* Does it not, thinks thee, stand me  
now upon ?

He that hath kill'd my king, and stained my  
mother ;

Popp'd in between the election and my  
hopes ;

Thrown out his angle for my proper life,  
And with such cozenage—is't not perfect  
conscience,

To quit him with this arm ? and is't not to be  
damn'd,

To let this canker of our nature come  
In further evil ?

*Hor.* It must be shortly known, to him  
70 from England,

What is the issue of the business there.

*Ham.* It will be short ; the interim is  
mine ;

And a man's life's no more than to say *One*.

But I am very sorry, good Horatio,

That to Laertes I forgot myself ;

For by the image of my cause, I see

The portraiture of his : I'll court his favors :

But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me  
Into a towering passion.

*Hor.* Peace ; who comes here ?

*Enter OSRIC.*

*Osr.* Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark. 80

*Ham.* I humbly thank you, sir. — Dost know this water-fly?

*Hor.* No, my good lord.

*Ham.* Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a vice to know him: he hath much land, and fertile; let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's mess: 'tis a chough; but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

*Osr.* Sweet lord, if your friendship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

*Ham.* I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit. Put your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head. 90

*Osr.* I thank your lordship, 'tis very hot.

*Ham.* No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is northerly.

*Osr.* It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

*Ham.* But yet methinks it is very sultry and hot for my complexion.

*Osr.* Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry,—as 'twere,—I cannot tell how.—But, my lord, his majesty bade me signify to you that he has laid a great wager on your head: sir, this is the matter.

*Ham.* I beseech you, remember——

[HAMLET moves him to put on his hat.

*Osr.* Nay, in good faith; for mine ease, in 100

good faith. Sir, here is newly come to court, Laertes; believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society and great showing: indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry, for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.

*Ham.* Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you; though, I know, to divide him inventorially, would dizzy the arithmetic of memory; and yet but yaw neither, in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article;  
110 and his infusion of such dearth and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror; and who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

*Osr.* Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

*Ham.* The concernancy, sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

*Osr.* Sir?

*Hor.* Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do't, sir, really.

*Ham.* What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

120 *Osr.* Of Laertes?

*Hor.* His purse is empty already; all his golden words are spent.

*Ham.* Of him, sir.

*Osr.* I know, you are not ignorant—

*Ham.* I would you did, sir ; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me.— Well, sir.

*Osr.* You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is—

*Ham.* I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence ; but to know a man well, were to know himself.

*Osr.* I mean, sir, for his weapon ; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed he's unfellowed. 130

*Ham.* What's his weapon ?

*Osr.* Rapier and dagger.

*Ham.* That's two of his weapons : but, well.

*Osr.* The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses : against the which he has imponed, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so : three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

*Ham.* What call you the carriages ?

*Hor.* I knew you must be edified by the 140  
margent ere you had done.

*Osr.* The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

*Ham.* The phrase would be more germane to the matter, if we could carry cannon by our sides : I would it might be hangers till then. But, on : six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages : that's the French



bet against the Danish. Why is this *imponed*, as you call it?

*Osr.* The king, sir, hath laid, that in a dozen passes between you and him, he shall  
150 not exceed you three hits; he hath laid on twelve for nine; and that would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

*Ham.* How, if I answer No?

*Osr.* I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

*Ham.* Sir, I will walk here in the hall. If it please his majesty, it is the breathing-time of day with me: let the foils be brought the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him, if I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame, and the odd hits.

160 *Osr.* Shall I re-deliver you e'en so?

*Ham.* To this effect, sir; after what flourish your nature will.

*Osr.* I commend my duty to you. lordship.

*Ham.* Yours, yours. [*Exit OSRIC.*—He does well to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for's turn.

*Hor.* This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.

*Ham.* He did comply with his dug, before he sucked it. Thus has he (and many more of the same bevy, that, I know the drossy age dotes on) only got the tune of the time, and outward habit of encounter; a

kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trials, the bubbles are out. 170

*Enter a Lord.*

*Lord.* My lord, his majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him, that you attend him in the hall: he sends to know, if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

*Ham.* I am constant to my purposes; they follow the king's pleasure: if his fitness speaks, mine is ready; now or whensoever, provided I be so able as now.

*Lord.* The king and queen and all are coming down. 180

*Ham.* In happy time.

*Lord.* The queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes, before you fall to play.

*Ham.* She well instructs me. [*Exit Lord.*]

*Hor.* You will lose this wager, my lord.

*Ham.* I do not think so; since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart: but it is no matter.

*Hor.* Nay, good my lord,—

*Ham.* It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving, as would, perhaps, trouble a woman. 190

*Hor.* If your mind dislike anything, obey it : I will forestall their repair hither, and say you are not fit.

*Ham.* Not a whit, we defy augury ; there's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come ; if it be not to come, it will be now ; if it be not now, yet it will come : the readiness is all : since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes ? Let be.

*Enter KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, Lords, ORSIC, and Attendants, with foils, &c.*

*King.* Come, Hamlet, come, and take this  
200 hand from me.

*[The KING puts the hand of LAERTES into that of HAMLET.]*

*Ham.* *[To LAERTES.]* Give me your pardon, sir ; I have done you wrong ; But pardon't, as you are a gentleman. This presence knows, and you must needs have heard, How I am punish'd with a sore distraction. What I have done, That might your nature, honor, and exception, [ness. Roughly awake, I here proclaim was mad- Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes ? Never Hamlet :

If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,  
210 And, when he's not himself, does wrong Laertes,  
Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it. Who does it then ? His madness ; if't be so

Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd ;  
His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.  
Sir, in this audience,  
Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil  
Free me so far in your most generous  
thoughts,  
That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house,  
And hurt my brother.

*Laer.* I am satisfied in nature,  
Whose motive, in this case, should stir me  
most

220

To my revenge : but in my terms of honor  
I stand aloof ; and will no reconciliation.  
Till by some elder masters, of known honor,  
I have a voice and precedent of peace,  
To keep my name ungor'd. But till that  
time,

I do receive your offer'd love like love,  
And will not wrong it.

*Ham.* I embrace it freely ;  
And will this brother's wager frankly play.  
Give us the foils. Come on.

*Laer.* Come, one for me.

*Ham.* I'll be your foil, Laertes ; in mine  
ignorance

230

Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night,  
Stick fiery off indeed.

*Laer.* You mock me, sir.

*Ham.* No, by this hand.

*King.* Give them the foils, young Osric.

Cousin Hamlet,  
You know the wager ?

*Ham.* Very well, my lord ;

Your grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.

*King.* I do not fear it: I have seen you both. [odds.]

But since he's better'd, we have therefore

*Laer.* This is too heavy, let me see another. 240

*Ham.* This likes me well. These foils have all a length?

*Osr.* Ay, my good lord.

[*They prepare to play.*]

*King.* Set me the stoups of wine upon that table:—

If Hamlet give the first or second hit,  
Or quit in answer of the third Exchange,  
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire;  
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better  
breath;

And in the cup an union shall he throw,  
Richer than that which four successive kings  
In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me  
the cups; 250

And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,  
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,  
The cannons to the heavens, the heavens to  
earth, [gin;—

*Now the king drinks to Hamlet.*—Come, be—  
And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

*Ham.* Come on, sir.

*Laer.* Come on, sir. [*They play.*]

*Ham.* One.

*Laer.* No.

*Ham.* Judgment.

*Osr.* A hit, a very palpable hit.

*Laer.* Well,—again.

*King.* Stay, give me drink :—Hamlet, this  
pearl is thine ;

Here's to thy health.

[*Trumpets sound ; and cannon shot off within.*

Give him the cup.

*Ham.* I'll play this bout first ; set it by  
awhile. [you? 260

Come. [*They play.*] Another hit ; what say

*Laer.* A touch, a touch, I do confess.

*King.* Our son shall win.

*Queen.* He's hot, and scant of breath.—  
Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy  
brows :

The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

*Ham.* Good madam !

*King.* Gertrude, do not drink.

*Queen.* I will, my lord ;—I pray you, pardon me.

*King.* [*aside.*] It is the poison'd cup : it is  
too late.

*Ham.* I dare not drink yet, madam ; by-  
and-by.

*Queen.* Come, let me wipe thy face. 270

*Laer.* My lord, I'll hit him now.

*King.* I do not think it.

*Laer.* [*aside.*] And yet it is almost against  
my conscience.

*Ham.* Come, for the third, Laertes : you  
but dally ;

I pray you, pass with your best violence ;

I am afeard you make a wanton of me.

*Laer.* Say you so? come on. [*They play.*

*Osr.* Nothing, neither way.

*Laer.* Have at you now.

[*LAER. wounds HAM.; then, in scuffling, they change rapiers, and HAM. wounds LAER.*

*King.* Part them, they are incensed.

*Ham.* Nay, come again. [*The QUEEN falls.*

*Osr.* Look to the queen there, ho!

*Hor.* They bleed on both sides!—How is it, my lord?

*Osr.* How is't, Laertes?

*Laer.* Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osric;

I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

*Ham.* How does the queen?

*King.* She swoons to see them bleed.

*Queen.* No, no, the drink, the drink,—O my dear Hamlet!—

The drink, the drink;—I am poison'd! [*Dies.*

*Ham.* O villany!—Ho! Let the door be lock'd:

Treachery! seek it out. [*LAERTES falls.*

*Laer.* It is here, Hamlet: Hamlet, thou art slain;

290 No medicine in the world can do thee good,  
In thee there is not half an hour of life;  
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,  
Unbated, and evenom'd: the foul practice  
Hath turn'd itself on me; lo, here I lie,  
Never to rise again! thy mother's poison'd;  
I can no more; the king, the king's to blame.

*Ham.* The point—evenom'd too!—

Then, venom, to thy work. [*Stabs the KING.*

*Osr. and Lords.* Treason ! treason !

*King.* O, yet defend me, friends, I am but hurt.

300

*Ham.* Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damnèd Dane,

Drink off this potion :—is thy union here ?

Follow my mother. [KING dies.

*Laer.* He is justly served.

It is a poison temper'd by himself.—

Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet :

[thee.

Mine and my father's death come not upon  
Nor thine on me ! [Dies.

*Ham.* Heaven make thee free of it ! I follow thee.

I am dead, Horatio.—Wretched queen, adieu !

You that look pale and tremble at this chance, 310

That are but mutes or audience to this act,

Had I but time, (as this fell sergeant, death,

Is strict in his arrest,) O, I could tell you,—

But let it be :—Horatio, I am dead ;

Thou liv'st ; report me and my cause aright

To the unsatisfied.

*Hor.* Never believe it.

I am more an antique Roman than a Dane,

Here's yet some liquor left.

*Ham.* As thou'rt a man,

Give me the cup ; let go ; by heaven I'll have it.

O good Horatio, what a wounded name, 320

Things standing thus unknown, shall live  
behind me !

If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,



Absent thee from felicity awhile, [pain,  
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in  
To tell my story.

[*March afar off, and shot within.*

What warlike noise is this ?

*Osr.* Young Fortinbras, with conquest  
come from Poland,

To the ambassadors of England gives  
This warlike volley.

*Ham.*

O, I die, Horatio ;

The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit ;

330 I cannot live to hear the news from England ;

But I do prophesy the election lights

On Fortinbras ; he has my dying voice ;

So tell him, with the occurrents, more and  
less,

Which have solicited.—

[*Dies.*

*Hor.* The rest is silence. Now cracks a  
noble heart. Good night, sweet prince ;

And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest !

Why does the drum come hither ?

[*March within.*

*Enter FORTINBRAS, the English Ambassadors, and  
others.*

*Fort.* Where is this sight ?

*Hor.* What is it ye would see ?

If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.

*Fort.* This quarry cries on havoc.—O  
340 proud death !

What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,

That thou so many princes at a shot

So bloodily hast struck ?

*I Amb.* The sight is dismal ;  
And our affairs from England come too late :  
The ears are senseless that should give us  
hearing,  
To tell him his commandment is fulfill'd,  
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are  
dead :

Where should we have our thanks ?

*Hor.* Not from his mouth,  
Had it the ability of life to thank you ;  
He never gave commandment for their death. 350  
But since, so jump upon this bloody ques-  
tion, [England,  
You from the Polack wars. and you from  
Are here arrived, give order, that these bodies  
High on a stage be placèd to the view ;  
And let me speak to the yet unknowing  
world  
How these things came about : so shall you  
hear  
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts ;  
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters ;  
Of deaths put on by cunning and forced  
cause ;  
And, in this upshot, purposes mistook 360  
Fallen on the inventors' heads : all this can I  
Truly deliver.

*Fort.* Let us haste to hear it,  
And call the noblest to the audience.  
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune ;  
I have some rights of memory in this king-  
dom, [me.  
Which now to claim my vantage doth invite

*Hor.* Of that I shall have also cause to  
speak, [on more ;  
And from his mouth whose voice will draw  
But let this same be presently perform'd,  
E'en while men's minds are wild, lest more  
370 mischance

On plots and errors happen.

*Fort.* Let four captains  
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage ;  
For he was likely, had he been put on,  
To have proved most royally : and, for his  
passage,  
The soldiers' music, and the rites of war  
Speak loudly for him.—  
Take up the bodies :—such a sight as this  
Becomes the field, but here shows much  
amiss.

Go, bid the soldiers shoot. [*A dead March.*  
[*Exeunt, marching ; after which a peal of  
ordnance is shot off.*

# NOTES.

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**ABBREVIATIONS.**—O. E. = Old English; H. Ger. = High German (the German usually taught in our schools is N. H. G. = New High German); L. Ger. = Low German (= English); N. Fr. = Norman-French; Gr. = Greek; Lat. = Latin; Dim. = diminutive; Cogs. = cognates; Cf. (= confer), compare; Cl. P. S. = Clarendon Press Series; and Co. S. = Collins's Series. Notes without name appended are Prof. Meiklejohn's. In the naming of plays short titles have been used. Thus the *Taming of the Shrew* is mentioned as *The Shrew*; *All's Well that Ends Well* as *All's Well*; *Troilus and Cressida* as *Troilus*. For Shakespeare, we have always printed S.

## ACT FIRST.

### SCENE I.

Elsinore, or Helsingör, is on the east coast of Zealand, about twenty-four miles from Copenhagen. On a point near it stands the castle of Kronborg, built in 1577, which commands the entrance to the Baltic. The first scene is in this castle.

3. **Long live the king!** This was the password for the night-watch.

6. **Upon your hour.** As Francisco speaks, the castle clock strikes twelve. Coleridge says, 'Note the natural and easy tone of the dialogue, which contains no labored description of the night or of the scenery. We seem to be accidentally overhearing a conversation.'

8. **Much** = great. For the use of *much* with the plural, cf. Luke, xii. 19: 'Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years.'—**Bitter** for *bitterly*. Dr. Abbott (sect. 1) says, 'In Early English many adverbs were formed from adjectives by adding *e* (dative) to the positive degree; as *bright*, adj.; *brighte*, adv. In time the *e* was dropped,

but the adverbial use was kept. Hence, from a false analogy, many adjectives (such as *excellent*), which could never form adverbs in *e*, were used as adverbs. We still say colloquially, *Come quick; the moon shines bright.*'

10. **Not a mouse stirring.** Coleridge says, 'The attention to minute sounds—naturally associated with the recollection of minute objects, and the more familiar and trifling, the more impressive from the unusualness of their producing any impression at all—gives a philosophic pertinency to this last image; but it has likewise its dramatic use and purpose.'

13. **Rivals, partners.** The quarto of 1603 has the reading *partners*. *Rivals* were those who lived on the same stream (*rivus*), to which they had a common right for purposes of irrigation, etc.; hence frequent disputes between those who lived up or down stream.

16. **Give you** = God give you.

19. **A piece of him.** Cf. the ordinary phrase: *Something like him.*

21. **What.** The O. E. interjection, generally used to call a person; sometimes also used as an exclamation of impatience.—**This thing . . . again.** Coleridge points out that 'even the word *again* has its *credibilizing* effect,' and how Horatio rises from the phrase *this thing to this dreaded sight*, and then to *this apparition*.

23. **Fantasy, imagination.** From Gr. *phantasia*, the power of making things *appear* (from *phainō*, I make to appear; cogs. are *phenomenon* and *phantasy*, which last has been contracted into *fancy*).

29. **Approve, confirm, corroborate the witness of.** Cf. *Merchant*, III. ii. 79, where Bassanio talks of 'approving an error with a text.'

31. **Assail and fortified** are terms such as a soldier would use.

36. **Pole** = pole-star.

37. **Made his course.** S. has also the phrases: *To hold a course; to run a course; to take a course.*—**Illume.** The only instance of the word in S.

39. **The bell** = the clock. (In H. Ger. *Glocke* still means *bell*.)—**Beating** = striking.

40. **Break thee** for *thou*. Dr. Abbott (sect. 212) says, "Look thee," "hark thee," are to be explained by euphonic reasons (and not as reflexive). *Thee*, thus used, follows imperatives which, being in themselves emphatic, require an unemphatic pronoun. The Elizabethans reduced *thou* to *thee*.

42. **Scholar**, able to read Latin—the language employed in exorcising a spirit.

44. **Most like**. Coleridge says, 'Note the judgment displayed in having the two persons present, who, as having seen the Ghost before, are naturally eager in confirming their former opinions; whilst the sceptic is silent, and after having been twice addressed by his friends, answers with two hasty syllables, *Most like*, and a confession of horror. Words are wasted on those who feel, and to those who do not feel, the exquisite judgment of S. in this scene.'

45. **Spoke to**. In allusion to the belief that a ghost will not speak until it has first been spoken to.

46. **Usurp'st . . . together with**. A daring zeugma. The Ghost usurps (= invades) the quiet night and also the fair form of the buried king.

49. **Sometimes** = sometime, that is, at one time.

55. **On't** = of it.—**Might not**, in the old sense of *could not*. The same sense is still found in the noun *might*, from *may*, the old form of which was *magan*.

56. **Avouch**, the only instance of this verb used as a noun by S.

60. **Norway** = the king of Norway.

61. **Parle**, parley. The usual meaning in S. is that of a conference with enemies regarding peace or a truce.

62. **Sledded Polacks**, Poles on sledges. Webster (quoted by Mr. Rolf) has the phrase, 'Like a shav'd Polack.' The word does not occur anywhere else in S. (except in V. ii. 352); nor does *sledded*.

64. **Jump** = exactly. This use of the adverb corresponds with S.'s use of the verb, and is most easily explained by it.

67. **In the gross**, in the general, as opposed to the *particular*, view of affairs.—**Scope**, general view.

68. **Bodes**, foretells.
71. **Toils**, used as a trans. verb.
72. **Cast** = casting.
73. **Mart**, marketing or buying. (*Mart* is a compressed form of *market*.)
74. **Impress** = impressment.
76. **Toward**, in preparation, at hand, coming on.
82. **Prick'd on**, spurred on. — **Emulate** = emulous. The only instance of the word in S.
83. **The combat**. *The* is employed *par excellence*. *The combat* = the (mortal) combat which puts an end to discussion.
86. **Law and heraldry** = heraldic law. A hendiadys.
87. **With his life**, in the event of his being killed. — **Those his lands**, in legal language.
88. **Seiz'd of** = possessed of—another legal term.
89. **Moiety**, from Late Lat. *medietas*, half; but frequently used by S. in the sense of a portion.
90. **Gag'd**, pledged or deposited as an equivalent to the lands of Fortinbras. *Gage* is a doublet of *wage*; and the French have *gages* for *wages*.
93. **Carriage of the article design'd**, tenor of the clause drawn up. For a very different meaning of *carriage*, see V. ii. 138.
95. **Unimprov'd**, undisciplined, untutored.
96. **Skirts**, borders.
97. **Shark'd up**, picked up wherever he could find them. — **List**, muster-roll. — **Resolutes**, desperadoes.
99. **That hath a stomach in't**, that requires courage.
106. **Romage**, bustle, confusion. A form of *rummage*, originally a sea word, meaning 'to set a ship to rights,' or 'to clear the hold of goods.'
107. **Be**. Dr. Abbott (sect. 299) says, '*Be* expresses more doubt than *is* after a verb of thinking'
108. **Sort**, suit or assort itself with the events going on all round us. — **Portentous**, ominous or full of portents.
110. **Question**, the subject and cause.
111. **A mote**, a small matter as compared with the significance of the things it portends.
115. **Gibber**, speak inarticulately.

116. **As stars.** It is pretty plain that a line must have dropped out. The speaker must have said something like this: And other terrible things were heard and seen.—**Stars with trains of fire, comets.**

117. **Disasters.** From Gr *dys*, ill, and *astron*, a star. One of the terms that have come down to us from astrology. Others are *influence*, *aspect*, *retrograde*, *ascendant*, etc.—**Moist star**, the moon.

119. **Sick . . . to doomsday**, as sick and ill as if the last day had come. A bold and subtle use of the preposition *to*.

120. **Precurse**, forerunning.

121. **Harbingers.** A *harbinger* was an officer of a royal household sent on in front to prepare *harborage* or lodging for the king.

124. **Climature**, country or region. The word comes from the Gr. *klima*, a slope—as the temperature depends on the slope of the sun's rays and the angle they make with the ground.

126. **Cross it.** It was an old belief that any one who crossed the path of a ghost was 'blasted' by it.

128. **Speak to me.** The importance of this adjuration demands a line for itself. The pause, which the emotion necessitates and the physical need of taking breath compels, fills up the full measure of the line, and represents the missing part.

133. **Happily.** Some commentators translate this as *haply*. Others think it = *luckily*.—**Foreknowing** = foreknowledge.

135. **Upboarded**, hoarded up.

139. **Partisan**, battle-axe (on long pole) or halbert. From Fr. *pertuisane*, said to be from O. Fr. *pertuiser*, to bore through; N. Fr. *percer*, to pierce.

148. **Fearful summons.** *Summons* is from Fr. *semonce*; from Lat. *submoneas*—the first word of the law Lat. in which the paper is written.

149. **The trumpet** = the trumpeter.

150. **Lofty**, an adverb to sounding, just like *thrill*.

153. **Extravagant**, in the literal sense of the Latin word, wandering beyond (*extra*) the night boundaries.



155. **Probation** (four syllables), proof.  
 157. **'Gainst.** Very often used of time in older English.  
 161. **Strike**, have a malignant influence. We still have the epithet *moonstruck*.  
 162. **Takes**, infects or blasts.  
 163. **Gracious**, full of grace, goodness, and favor.  
 172. **Loves.** S. and other writers of his time frequently use an abstract noun in the plural number, when the noun relates to several persons.

## SCENE 2.

1. Coleridge says, 'In the king's speech, observe the set and pedantically antithetic form of the sentences when touching that which galled the heels of conscience—the strain of undignified rhetoric—and yet in what follows concerning the public weal, a certain appropriate majesty.'

2. **That.** S. and other writers of his time have *though that, while that, lest that, when that*, etc.; and, when it was necessary to repeat the conjunction, they used the *that* merely as a representative. Here, accordingly, *that* stands for *though*.

4. **Brow of woe** = woful brow. A very common use of *of* in S.

9. **Jointress**, joint possessor. The only instance of the word in S.

10. **Defeated** = disfeatured, disfigured.

11. **Auspicious**, cheerful.—**Dropping** tears.

13. **In equal scale.** Here the formality and antithesis verge closely on the ridiculous.—**Dole**, grief. There are two words with this spelling in English. *Dole*, a share, from *deal*, is a purely English word. *Dole* (*doleful*, *condole*, etc.) is from the O. Fr. *doel*, Fr. *deuil*, from Lat. *dolor*, grief.

14. **To wife.** The Old English idiom.—**Barr'd**, excluded.

18. **Supposal**, opinion. The only instance of the word in S.

21. **Colleaguèd**, allied. The only instance of the word.

22. **He**, a superfluous pronoun; but the distance of the

proper nominative legitimates its use.—**Pester**, trouble, bother.

23. **Importing**, purporting, having for import.

24. **With** = in accordance with.

29. **Bed-rid**, "A. S. *bed*, a bed, and *rida*, a knight, a rider." Earle suggests that it is the participle of *bedrian*, to bewitch.

31. **Gait**, going on with, or procedure in, it. *Gait* is said to be a doublet or by-form of *gate*. The original meaning seems to be an opening. (The H. Ger. form is *Gasse*) The word really comes from *get*, not from *go*.—

**In that** = inasmuch as

33. **Subject**, here a collective noun, as in I. i. 71.

35. **For bearers** = as bearers.

39. **Commend your duty**, be the test which will prove that you have done your duty.

41. **Nothing**, used adverbially.

43. **Suit**, request, petition.

45. **Lose your voice** = ask in vain.—**Thou beg**. Note the transition from *you* to *thou*. It marks the increase in the professions of the king towards Laertes.

47. **Native to**, closely related to.

48. **Instrumental to**, fully subservient to. S. often applies the word *instruments* to *persons*. Claudius was probably under great obligations to Polonius—perhaps for securing his election to the throne instead of Hamlet.

56. **Pardon**, permission to return.

'I begg'd

His pardon for return'

(= leave to go back).

58. **Slow leave** = slowly given leave. The freedom with which S. plays with adjectives is seen in many phrases. Dr. Schmidt says, 'As the English adjective has no inflection, it was formerly apt to form a looser connection with its substantive than in other languages; and instead of expressing a quality or degree pertaining to the latter, to be employed to limit the extent and sphere of it. Thus *a bloody fire* in *Merry Wives*, V. v., is not a fire that has the quality of being bloody, but, as it were, a blood-fire, a fire in the blood.'

60. **Upon his will** = induced by his desire. S. frequently uses *upon* in this way. — **Hard consent.** See note on line 58.

64. **Cousin** = relative. (The word is a concentrated form of the Lat. *consobrinus* = *consororinus*, a mother's sister's son.) S uses it in the sense of *nephew*; of *niece*; of *uncle*; of *brother-in-law*; and of *grandchild*.

65. **Kin . . . kind.** The latter word must have been pronounced *kinned*; otherwise the antithesis would have been lost. More than an ordinary kinsman—for he is both stepson and nephew; but not feeling at all friendly. "More than kin to Hamlet in being uncle and father—*twice* kin—but less than kind, because his incestuous marriage is *unnatural*, out of nature, or kind."

67. **P the sun.** Another punning reference to his dislike of the too frequent use of the word *son* by his uncle. Some commentators think they see in this a reference to an old English proverb: 'Out of God's blessing into the warm sunne,' which meant, 'Thrust out of house and home into the open air, which is the common property of all men.'

73. **Nature**, the state of being born, or human life.

74. **Ay, madam.** Coleridge remarks, 'Here observe Hamlet's delicacy to his mother, and how the suppression prepares him for the overflow in the next speech, in which his character is more developed, by bringing forward his aversion to externals, and which betrays his habit of brooding over the world within him, coupled with a prodigality of beautiful words, which are the half-embodiments of thought, and are more than thought. Note also Hamlet's silence to the long speech of the king which follows, and his respectful, but general, answer to his mother.'

79. **Suspuration**, sighing. The only instance of the word in S. But he has *suspire* twice.

81. **'Havior for behavior.** The word occurs seven times in S.

83. **Denote . . . truly** give a true and complete indication of what I feel.

90. **Bound** = was bound.

92. **Obsequious**, in the old and literal sense of *belonging to obsequies, funereal*.

93. **Condolement**, grief. Observe that the king, being in an artificial and self-conscious state of mind all through the play, employs Latin words, a pompous diction, and elaborate phrases. Feeling that *he* was the cause of all this sorrow, it was simply impossible that he should be able to use the simple and natural words that would be fit for the occasion.

95. **Incorrect** (a participle, not a mere adjective), in the literal Latin sense of *uncorrected or unsubdued*.

97. **Simple**, foolish, witless.

99. **Any the most**. S. has also the phrases: *One the truest mannered; one the wisest prince*.—**Vulgar**, in its original Latin sense of *common*. So the Bible was translated into the 'vulgar tongue.'

101. **Fault**, offence.—**To** = against.

105. **Till he** = down to him.

107. **Unprevailing** = unavailing. In two passages, S. uses *prevail* in the sense of *avail*.

112. **Impart**. Probably S. meant the object of this verb to be *love*. He forgot his previous construction.—**For** = as for.

113. **School** = university. The University of Wittenberg was founded in 1502. Of course this is a necessary anachronism. 'At that great outburst of devotion to letters and philosophy which accompanied the Reformation, and both created and fostered into almost instant maturity the universities of Northern Europe, it was not only youths who thronged to drink and bathe in the streams of knowledge, but also men of mature age.'—STRACHEY.

114. **Rotrograde to our desire**. Another piece of affectation for *contrary to our wish*.

115. **Bend you** (a reflective verb) = be inclined.

124. **Sits smiling to my heart** = sits close to my heart smiling.—**In grace whereof** = and to grace or honor this (consent).

127. **Rouse**, full bumper. (The word is said to come from Danish, *rós*, a beaker.) In S.'s time the Danes wer

known as the most intemperate people in Europe.—**Bruit**, report.

132. **Canon**, religious law.—**Self-slaughter**, the pure English phrase for *suicide*.

134. **Uses**, customs.

140. **Hyperion**, the god of the sun, a name in Homer for Apollo, the god of poetry, music, medicine, archery, and arts. Warburton says, 'By the Satyr is meant Pan; as by Hyperion, Apollo.'

141. **Might not**, could not.—**Beteem**, permit. The only other place in S. where the word occurs is in *Midsummer*, I. i.

142. **Visit**. Note the omission of the *to*.

147. **Or ere**. *Or* is a doublet or by-form of *ere*. *Or ere* is therefore a tautological phrase, like *an if*.

149. **Niobe**, daughter of Tantalus, king of Lydia. She was proud of her large family, and insulted Latona, the mother of Apollo and Diana. Wherefore Apollo slew all her sons; and Diana all her daughters—save Chloris; and Niobe, smitten dumb with sorrow, grew into a rock, from which tears flow for ever.

150. **Discourse of reason**, the power of looking this way and that way, and at length choosing. (From Lat. *dis*, apart, and *curro*, I run.)

155. **Left the flushing** = ceased to produce redness.

157. **Nor it cannot**. In older English, negatives supported and intensified each other. The annihilation of each other, as in Milton's *Nor did they not perceive him*, is a Latin usage, and has been imported into our language.

162. **Change** = exchange (the name of *servant*).

163. **Make you** = are you doing. An old English phrase, like the German *Was machen Sie?*

178. **Thrift, thrift**. 'What a blast of sarcasm,' says Coleridge, 'whistles through the consonants of this word.'

—**Bak'd meats**. It was customary, as it still is in Scotland, to have a great feast at a funeral.

180. **Dearest foe**. The word *dear*, in S., has a wide range of meaning. Besides all its modern meanings, it is frequently used to designate that which touches the heart

most closely, whether with pain or with pleasure, with love or with hatred.

191. **Season**, control or moderate.—**Admiration**, wonder.

192. **Attent**, attentive. Only twice found in S.—**May** = can.—**Deliver** = relate.

197. **Dead**. S. has also *The dead of darkness; the dead of night; the dreadful dead of dark midnight*.—**Vast**, used as a noun. *Vast* and *waste* are two forms of the same word (from Lat. *vastus*).

199. **Cap-à-pé** = cap-à-pied, from head to foot.

203. **Distill'd**, melted.

204. **With** = by. This was the old use of *with*. The modern meaning was represented by *mid* (the Germans still have *mit*).—**Act** = operation.

215. **Its head**. The word *its* (the old neuter of *he* was *hit*; poss. *his*) was hardly naturalized in S.'s time. No instance is found in our version of the Bible, except in Leviticus, xxv. 5: 'That which groweth of its own accord' (which was printed in the version of 1611, 'it own accord'); in all other places we find the correct form *his*. In the folio editions of S., the poss. *it* is found fourteen times; *it's*, nine times; and *its*, only once.

216. **As** = as if.

228. **Beaver**, from O. Fr. *bevere* (from Lat. *bibere*), to drink. The movable front or visor of the helmet, which the wearer raises for the purpose of drinking.

233. **Constantly**, steadily.

235. **Like** = likely. S. has *like enough*; and *most like*.

236. **Tell**, count. This is the oldest meaning of the word. (Cf. *count* and *recount*.) Hence the words *toll*, *teller*, *tale*, etc.

241. **Warrant**, a monosyllable.

243. **Gape**, roar at me.

252. **Your loves** = Say rather your love.

254. **Doubt**, suspect or fear.

### SCENE 3.

3. **Convoy**, means of transport.—**Is assistant**, is at

hand, or ready. S. uses the verb *assist* in the sense of *attend* or *being present at*—like Fr. *assister*.

6. **Toy**, a mere fancy, not a deep-rooted passion.—**In blood** = in a high state of health and good spirits. *In blood* is a term of the chase.

7. **Primy nature**, nature in its first spring. The only instance of the word; but S. twice uses *prime* for *spring*.

9. **Suppliance** (with the accent on the second syllable), that which supplies or fills up for the time being.

11. **Crescent**, in the literal sense of the Latin word *crescens*, growing. We still have the phrase, *crescent moon*.

12. **Thews**, muscles and sinews.—**This temple**, the body (see John, ii. 21). The use of the word *temple* suggests the employment of the term *service*.

15. **Cautel**, deceit, falseness. Only twice used by S. But he has *cautelous* in *Julius Cæsar*, II. i. 129.—**Be-smirch**, stain.

16. **Will** = intentions.

18. **Birth**, rank into which he was born.

21. **Health** = prosperity. (*Health* is the noun from *heal*, a by-form of *hail*. Cogs.: *hale*, (*w*)*hole*, etc.)

23. **Yielding**, used in a passive sense.

30. **Credent**, belief ful. (*Credulous* is hardly the meaning.)—**Songs**—in a contemptuous sense, as we still say, 'for an old song.'

33. **Rear, shot, danger**—all military terms.

35. **Chariest**, most careful or scrupulous.

38. **Canker** for canker-worm.

39. **Buttons . . . disclos'd**, buds opened.

41. **Blastments**, blights.

44. **Effect**, import.

45. **Good my brother**. The *my* in *my lord*, etc., practically forms part of the word, and hence cannot be disjoined by the force of an adjective which has a less frequent connection with it.

46. **Ungracious** = graceless. The *un* destroys the force of the *ous*.

50. **Recks**, attends to. Cogs.: *Reckon*; *reckless*.—**Rede**, advice. (H. Ger. *Rath*.)—**Fear me not**. The *me* is here a dative, and the phrase is = *Fear not for me*.

52. **Double**. Laertes had already taken leave of his father.

58. **Character**, inscribe, engrave.

59. **Unproportion'd**, disproportionate, disorderly, unsuitable to the occasion.

60. **Vulgar** = too familiar, too easy in making friends or permitting approach. 'Don't make yourself too cheap or common.'

61. **And their adoption tried** = having been tried.

62. **Grapple**, strongly bind.

63. **Dull thy palm**, make thy palm callous.—**With entertainment** = by entertaining or receiving.

68. **Censure**, opinion.

70. **Express'd in fancy**, marked or too 'loud' in pattern.

76. **Husbandry**, economy.

80. **Season**, ripen or bring to maturity.

Professor Dowden remarks on the above speech, 'The advice of Polonius is a cento of quotations from Lyly's *Euphues*. Its significance must be looked for less in the matter than in the sententious manner. Polonius has been wise with the little wisdom of worldly prudence. . . . In the shallow lore of life he has been learned. Of true wisdom he never had a gleam. And what S. wishes to signify in this speech is, that wisdom of Polonius's kind consists in a set of maxims; all such wisdom might be set down for the headlines of copy-books. That is to say, his wisdom is not the outflow of a rich or deep nature, but the little accumulated hoard of a long and superficial experience. That is what the sententious manner signifies. And very rightly S. has put into Polonius's mouth the noble lines:—

"To thine own self be true;  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

Yes, Polonius has got one great truth among his copy-book maxims, but it comes in as a little bit of hard, unvital wisdom, like the rest: "*Dress well, don't lend or borrow money: to thine own self be true.*"—DOWDEN'S *Mind and Art of Shakespeare*, p. 142.

82. **Tend** = attend.



89. **Bethought** = thought of or recollected.  
 92. **Audience**, listening or hearing.  
 93. **Put on me**, told me.  
 97. **Give me up the truth**. Polonius generally employs the most formal and official phrases he can find.  
 100. **Green**, inexperienced. Still used in this sense.  
 101. **Unsifted**, untried.—**Circumstance**, used as a collective noun.  
 105. **Tenders** (like bank-notes), *promises* to pay.  
 106. **Sterling**, a broken-down form of *Easterling*. *Sterling* was the name of the English penny—the only legal tender in which payments could be made. *Easterlings* was the popular name in England for German traders from the Hanse Towns; their money was of the purest quality.  
 108. **Tender me a fool**, make an ass of me.  
 111. **Fashion**. Polonius takes the word in its second and lighter sense.  
 114. **Springses**, snares. — **Woodcocks** were popularly supposed to have no brains, and hence the word became a synonym for a simpleton.  
 117. **Extinct**, dead as soon as they are born—gone in the very making of them.  
 118. **A-making**. The *a* is the broken-down form of *an*, a dialectic form of *on*.  
 121. **Your entreatments** = the invitations you receive. Do not consider them merely in the light of a *command*.  
 126. **Brokers**, go-betweens.  
 127. **Investments**, dress.  
 128. **Implorators**, solicitors.  
 129. **Breathing**, speaking.—**Pious bonds**. ‘Like law papers headed with religious formulæ.’  
 130. **For all** = in short. Cf. the phrase, ‘once for all.’  
 132. **Moment** for moment’s.

## SCENE 4.

Coleridge remarks, ‘The unimportant conversation with which this scene opens is a proof of S.’s minute knowledge of human nature. It is a well-established fact that, on the brink of any serious enterprise, or event of mo-

ment, men almost invariably endeavor to elude the pressure of their own thoughts by turning aside to trivial objects and familiar circumstances. Thus the dialogue on the platform begins with remarks on the coldness of the air, and inquiries—obliquely connected indeed with the expected hour of the visitation, but thrown out in a seeming vacuity of topics, as to the striking of the clock, and so forth. The same desire to escape from the impending thought is carried on in Hamlet's account of, and moralizing on, the Danish custom of wassailing. . . . Besides this, another purpose is answered; for, by thus entangling the attention of the audience in the nice distinctions and parenthetical sentences of this speech of Hamlet's, S. takes them completely by surprise on the appearance of the Ghost, which comes upon them in all the suddenness of its visionary character.

1. **Shrewdly**, keenly.

2. **Eager**, sharp. From Fr. *aigre*; from Lat. *acer*. Cogs.: *Vinegar*; *acid*.

8. **Wake**, sit up late. The feast of the dedication of a church (formerly celebrated by watching, that is, *waking* all night) is still called in the country a *wake*.

9. **Wassail**, a drinking-bout. From O. E. *was hail* = *be well! health!*—**Up-spring**, the last, and, accordingly, the wildest dance at the old German *merry makings*. *Up-spring* is a noun, the object of *reels*.

10. **Rhenish**. The wine produced in the Rheingau—between Bonn and Bingen.

12. **Pledge**, the health pledged or drunk.

18 **Traduc'd**, slandered.—**Tax'd**, censured. Another form of *tax* (by metathesis) is *task*.

19. **Clepe**, call. S. has the word five times; and Milton has *yclept*.—**Drunkards**. In S.'s time, the English and the Danes were considered the most drunken nations in Europe. See *Othello*, II. 82.—**With swinish phrase** = by calling us *swine*.

21. **At height** = at our best, with all our power.

22. **Attribute** = the reputation attributed to us.

24. **Mole of nature**, inherited blemish.

27. **Some complexion** (a quadrisyllable) = some one

complexion. There were four, distinguished by the old physicians—the sanguine; the melancholic; the phlegmatic; and the choleric. Men are discredited by some congenital defect, which they can no more cure than they can a mole on their skin, by the overgrowth of some natural temper, which reason cannot control, or by some acquired habit of unmannerliness.—MOBERLY.

30. **Plausive**, pleasing.

32. **Nature's livery or fortune's star**, a defect given (*livré*) by Nature, or a mark got by accident. The *star* might be a mark like a star.

34. **Undergo**, carry.

36. **Æil**. The usual reading is *eale*. There are forty-seven conjectural readings of this famous passage; and it would take many pages to set them forth and to comment upon them. The sense is plain enough. It is, 'The small admixture of evil constantly destroys the substance, which is intrinsically noble, to the shame and disgrace of the substance.'

37. **Ever dout**, always destroy or put out.

The above speech is the first instance in the play of the generalizing spirit—predominance of the intellectual—which is one of the feelings that keep Hamlet from sweeping on to the necessary action.

40. **Spirit of health** = a healed, that is, saved spirit.

43. **Questionable**, inviting question.

47. **Hearsed**, entombed.

48. **Cerements**, shroud. From Lat. *cera*, wax. It was a kind of cloth, dipped in wax, and used to wrap the bodies of the dead in.

53. **Glimpses** = gleams or glimmers (words which are cognate)

54. **We** ought to be *us*.—**Fools of nature** = whom nature has made fools of.

55. **Disposition**, constitution.

56. **Reaches**, powers of comprehension.

64. **Should** = in your opinion.

65. **Set** = value.

71. **Beetles**, leans over. *Beetle-brows* are overhanging brows.

73. **Your sovereignty of reason.** *Sovereignty-of-reason* is to be looked on as one word.

75. **Toys,** freaks. fancies of a desperate character.

83. **Nemean.** The accent is usually on the second syllable. *Nemea* was the name of a rock in Argolis (in the Peloponnesus), near which Hercules slew a great lion.—**Nerve,** muscle.

85. **Lets me** = hinders me. Cf. the phrase, *without let or hindrance*. (There are two words *let* in English. The *let*, to allow, is from O. E. *letan*; and is the L. Ger. form of the H. Ger. *lassen*. The *let*, to hinder, is from O. E. *læt*, slow, and is connected with *late*, *lazy*.)

89. **Have after** = Let us after him.

91. **It**, the issue.

#### SCENE 5.

11. **To fast.** 'And moreover the misese of helle shal be in defaute of mete and drink.'—CHAUCER.

20. **Porpentine**, the form always used by S. One writer of the eighteenth century has *porcuspine*.

21. **Eternal blazon**, abominable proclamation. 'A *blaze* is a white mark on a horse; to *blaze* trees is to notch them with an axe, so as to find out the way back. To *blazon*, therefore, means properly to *mark out*; hence, to *reveal*.'—MOBERLY.

33. **Lethe wharf**, Lethe's banks. In *Antony*, II. ii., the banks of the Nile are called 'the adjacent wharfs.'—**Lethe**, the river of forgetfulness in Hades.

37. **Process**, account.

38. **Rankly**, grossly.

41. **Prophetic soul.** See I. ii. 254, where Hamlet says, 'I doubt some foul-play.'

45. **Hebenon**, henbane.

51. **Posset**, coagulate. A posset was a drink composed of hot milk, curdled by some strong infusion, and taken before going to bed.

52. **Eager**, sour.

54. **Instant**, instantaneous.—**Tetter**, scab, scurf.—**Bark'd about**, grew like bark around.

55. **Lazar** = leper. The name came from Lazarus (see

Luke, xvi.) Hence *Lazaretto*, a house for lepers; then any hospital.

58. **Dispatch'd**, a case of zeugma. It was the word *life* that suggested *dispatch'd*; and then it was easily joined to the others. This is the only instance in S. of *dispatch* being followed by *of*. But the *of* is = *from*.

60. **Unhousel'd**. *Housel* was an O. E. word for *offering* or *sacrifice*. The word here is = without the Eucharist. — **Disappointed**, without the right appointments or preparations. — **Unanel'd**, without having received extreme unction. To *anete* (O. E. *anoilen*) was to *anoint with oil* or *etc.*

64. **Nature** = natural feeling.

69. **Fare thee well**. This *thee*—for *thou*—is to be explained, says Dr. Abbott, 'by euphonic reasons.'

70. **Matin**, morning.

78. **This distracted globe**, his head—which Hamlet is clasping tight with both hands.

79. **Table** = tablet. So *tabied* in S. means *set down in writing*; and *table-book* = *memorandum-book*.

81. **Saws**, sayings. The guttural in the O. E. *seggan* vanished into a *y* in *say*, and into a *w* in *saw*. — **Pressures** = impressions.

89. **One may smile**. The old habit of making generalizations and entering them in his notes is too much for Hamlet; and even at this tragic crisis of his life it overcomes him.

98. **Illo**. The cry used by a falconer to recall his hawk.

109. **Arrant**, thorough-going.

112. **Circumstance**, beating round about the bush.

133. **Upon my sword**. The hilt of the sword being in the form of a cross. Swearing by the sword was also an old Scandinavian custom.

135. **Truepenny**, honest fellow.

137. **Propose**, speak before us.

141. **Hic et ubique**, here and everywhere.

150. **Give it welcome**. Receive it without doubt or question. Cl. P. S.

152. **Your**, unaccented, and used 'colloquially,' like the Lat. *iste*.

157. **Antic**, odd, fantastic. *Antic* is a doublet of *antique*.

159. **Encumber'd**, folded.

161. **An if**, a tautological phrase—like *or ere*.

163. **Giving out**, assertion.

165. **Most** = greatest.

171. **Friending** = befriending.

172. **Shall not lack** = shall not be lacking.

174. **O cursèd spite!** Hamlet now begins to feel that he has a burden on his back that is rather beyond his strength. The time is out of joint; for the king, the centre of the state, is a criminal and murderer

## ACT SECOND.

### SCENE 1.

The following scene admits us to the secret of the character of Laertes, who is intended by S. as a foil to Hamlet. Laertes takes the world just as he finds it, and has no lofty aims or habits of meditation; but his worldly wisdom—brought suddenly face to face with a great tragedy (the death of his father and sister)—breaks utterly down; and he is whelmed in the common ruin at the end of the play.

7. **Inquire me**, a dative, often called by grammarians the *dativus ethicus*. Cf. *Julius Caesar*, l. ii. 263: 'He plucked me ope his doublet. — **Danskers**, Danes. The *sk* is the Northern form of the softer English (which used to be *Englise*) *ish*.

8. **Keep**, live. In Cambridge, the phrase, 'Where do you keep?' is used for, 'Where do you lodge?'

11. **Come you** = you are sure to come. — **More nearer**. S. frequently uses both (1) the double comparative and (2) the double superlative.

13. **Take you** = assume.

19. **Put on him** = lay to his charge.

20. **Rank**, gross or serious.

22. **Slips**, slight offences.

23. **Noted**, generally remarked.

28. **Breathe**, utter low or whisper.—**Quaintly**, with such skilful contrivance.

31. **Unreclaimed**, untamed.

32. **Of general assault**, such as generally assail youth.

35. **Fetch of warrant**. This may either mean a *warrantable* or *justifiable* contrivance, or a *device which has been found to be effective*.

39. **Him** for *he whom*. The *he* is 'attracted' into the objective by the *whom* understood.

40. **Prenominate**, aforesaid.

42. **In this consequence**, in following up the conversation. (From Lat. *consequi*, to follow.)

48. **Leave** = leave off.

59. **Of wisdom and of reach** = wise and shrewd. *Men of reach* means *far-sighted people*. Cf. Mr. Burke's (and Lord Beaconsfield's) phrase, *men of light and leading*.

60. **Windlases**, winding and roundabout ways. *To fetch a windlasse* and *to fetch a compass* were phrases in S.'s time for *to go round about*.—**Assays**, essays or trials.—**Of bias**, a metaphor taken from the game of bowls, in which the player does not send his bowl in a straight line, but trusts to the *bias* to bring it round to the required point.

61. **Indirections** = indirect methods.

63. **Have me** = understand me.

74. **Unbrac'd**, unfastened.

76. **Down-gyv'd**, sunk down to his ankles, where they looked like gyves or fetters. ('The exclusion from Ophelia's presence had been like the first knock of fate at the door of Hamlet's soul. He is claimed for his task.'—MOBERLY.)

78. **Purp'rt**, meaning.

87. **As** = as if.

88. **Shaking of**. The full construction was *a-shaking of*.

91. **Bulk**, body.

98. **Ecstasy**, madness.

99. **Whose violent property** = the property of the violence of which.—**Fordoos**, undoes, destroys.

105. **Repel**, send back.

108. **Quoted**, marked, noted.

109. **Beshrew**, a very mild form of imprecation.—**Jealousy**, suspicion.

110. **Proper**, in the sense of the Lat. *proprium* = a distinguishing mark.

111. **Cast beyond ourselves**, overreach ourselves—are too shrewd and cunning. ‘We of wisdom and of reach’ often overdo it.

115. **More grief to hide**. If we hid this, it would cause more grief and annoyance (to the king) than it would cause hatred in him if we tell him that Hamlet is in love with you.

## SCENE 2.

2. **Moreover that**, over and above the fact that.

3. **To use you** = to make use of your services.

6. **Since**. Another reading is *sith*. *Since* is a contraction of *sithennes*, the genitive of *sithen* or *sith*. In the sixteenth century, *sith* was used of logical progression; *since*, of progression in time.

11. **Of so young days** = from so early a time.

12. **Neighbor’d to**, closely associated with.

13. **That**, repeated and redundant.—**Vouchsafe your rest** = be good enough to reside.

22. **Gentry**, courtesy. Only in this play used in this sense.

23. **Expend**. The short form is *spend*. Cf. *example* and *sample*. There is a touch of affectation and of overstrained ceremoniousness in the speech of the Queen, who probably imitates the King in this.

24. **Supply and profit** = aid and furtherance.

25. **Visitation** = visit.

27. **Of us** = over us.

30. **Bent**, inclination.

42. **Still** = always.

52. **Fruit**, the dessert.

56. **Doubt**, suspect.—**The main** (cause).

60. **Desires**, good wishes.

61. **Upon our first** (desire).

64. **Truly** modifies *was*, not *found*.

67. **Borne in hand**, played with and deceived. Cf. Ben



Jonson's *Widow*, ii. 1: 'You have borne me in hand this three months, and now fobbed me.'

71. **Give the assay** = put to the test.

79. **Regards of safety**, such conditions as are safe and allowable.

81. **More consider'd time** = time for more consideration.

83. **Well-took** S. has also *drove* for *driven*; *smote* for *smitten*; *mistook* for *mistaken*, etc.

86. **Expostulate**, discuss fully.

90. **Wit**, common-sense, wisdom.

104. **The remainder (is) thus.**—**Perpend**, consider or weigh. This use of learned Latin words—like *expostulate*, *perpend*, etc.—is one of the notes of the style of Polonius.

107. **Gather, and surmise**, collect the data together and guess.

115-118. **Doubt**. In the first and second lines, *doubt* means *be doubtful about*; in the third, *suspect*; in the fourth, *have a misgiving*.

119. **Reckon**, express in numbered verse.

121. **Whilst this machine is to him**, so long as this body belongs to him. S.'s age was infected by this straining after effect, which Lyly's *Euphues* had made fashionable, and which was called *Euphuism*.

124. **More above** = moreover.

134. **Had play'd the . . . table-book**, had simply noted it down in my tables or memorandum-book, and let it go no further.

135. **Given my heart a winking**, had connived at the whole thing.

137. **Might** = would you have been able.—**Round**, roundly, without ceremony.

138. **Bespeak**, address.

139. **Out of thy star** = out of thy sphere.

143. **Took the fruits of**, profited by.

146. **Watch**, wakefulness, *insomnia*.

147. **Lightness** = light headedness.

149. **All we** = we all. Cf. Mark, xii. 44: 'All they did cast in of their abundance.' Polonius's description of the stages of Hamlet's illness is very comic. He had in fact

seen nothing; it was Ophelia, induced by Laertes, who told him.

157. **Centre** (of the earth).

161. **Arras**, the tapestry hung on the walls. A person might hide between the wall and it without being discovered. Great use is made of this in III. iv. (*Arras* is a town in the north of France, and gives its name to the hangings. Cf. *bayonet*, from *Bayonne*; *pistol*, from *Pistoja*; *currant*, from *Corinth*, etc.)

162. **Encounter**, manner of address.

166. **Wretch**, sometimes used as a term of endearment, mingled with pity.

168. **Board**, accost. When Polonius is not pedantic, he is coarse.—**Presently**, immediately.

170. **God'a-mercy** = God have mercy.

172. **Excellent** for *excellently*.

179. **For . . . carrion**. It has been supposed that Hamlet reads this out of his book.

187. **Matter**. Hamlet purposely misunderstands Polonius's meaning of the word.

192. **Purging**, discharging.

200. **Pregnant**, full of meaning.

201. **Happiness**, felicity of phrase.

217. **Indifferent**, middling, average.

225. **Doomsday**, the Day of Judgment. (**Doom** is connected with *deem*, and with *dom* in *kingdom*, etc., and *dempster*, the old word for a judge).

232. **Confines**, places of confinement.

246. **Then are our beggars bodies**; for our beggars have no ambition, and are thus the only solid and substantial existences.

247. **Outstretched**, strained, hyperbolic.

248. **Fay**; from O. Fr. *fei*, faith.

251. **Most dreadfully attended** by my own wretched thoughts. But Mr. Hunter thinks that 'Hamlet alludes to the annoyance of his being watched and observed so much.'

252. **Beaten**, usually trod, familiar, usual.

261. **But to the purpose**. For, if they did speak to the purpose, they must tell the truth. ]

267. **Consonancy**, agreement in age. This word is only twice used by S.

269. **A better proposer**, a more skilful speaker.—**Even**, plain, honest.—**Direct**, straightforward. ('A straight line is the shortest distance between two points.')

272. **Of you** = on you.

275. **Prevent**, anticipate, and so enable you to keep faith with those who have invited you. And the Prayer-Book has, 'Prevent us, O Lord, in all our doings' (where *prevent* has the literal Latin sense of *go before*).

276. **Moult**, drop. The O. E. was *mouten*; and the *l* is inorganic, as the word comes from Lat. *mutare*, to change. The place where hawks were kept was called *mews*—from the same root.

278. **Forgone**, given up. (Usually, but erroneously, written *foregone*. The *for* is the negative prefix, as in *forget*, *forgo*, *forgive*, etc.)

280. **Promontory**, stretching out into the sea of eternity; and across which human beings scuttle in a more or less undignified manner.

282. **Fretted**, adorned. There were in O. E. two verbs *fret*—the one (1), *fretan*, to eat (H. Ger. *fressen*, said of animals); the other (2), *frætran*, to adorn. For (1), see Chaucer, *The Knight's Tale*: 'The sowe freten the child right in the cradel.' For (2), *Piers Plowman*, ii. 11: 'Alle hir five fynGRES were fretted with rynges.'

285. **Express**, expressive, or full of expression.

287. **Paragon**, the peerless one, or highest pattern. From two Spanish prepositions, *para con* = in comparison with.

288. **Quintessence**, the fifth or highest essence of the alchemists—the essence which remained after the four 'elements,' earth, air, fire, and water, had been removed from the substance.

293. **Lenten**, meagre, poor.

294. **Coted**, came up with and passed. It was a term in hunting.

297. **He that plays the king**. Hamlet here for the first time has a vague forecast in his mind of the plan he is going to form.

299.<sup>1</sup> **Humorous** = full of humors and whims.

301. **Lungs tickle o' the sere**, lungs easily moved to laughter. The *sere* (now spelled *sear*) is the catch in a gun-lock which holds the hammer till it is released by the trigger. If this part of the lock be so made, or if it is much worn, the sear (or grip) may be so *tickle* that a slight touch may displace it, and the gun goes off.—**The lady** may spoil the blank verse as much as she likes.

305. **The city**, Copenhagen. Elsinore is the place at present.

306. **Residence** = remaining in the city.

308. **Inhibition**, prohibition to act. This may refer to the limiting of public performances in 1600 and 1601 to the two theatres called *The Globe* and *The Fortune*.—**Innovation**, "the insurrection of Essex."

315. **Aery** (incorrectly spelled *eyry*), an eagle's nest; a brood of eagles or hawks. From Low Lat. *area*, a nest of a bird of prey; perhaps from Icelandic *ari*, an eagle. (Professor Skeat says, in his *Etymological Dictionary*, 'When fairly imported into English, the word was ingeniously connected with Middle English, *ey*, an egg, as if the word meant an *eggery*; hence it came to be spelled *eyrie* or *eyry*, and to be misinterpreted accordingly.')—**Eyases**, nestlings, unfledged birds.—**Cry out on the top of question**, at the top of their voices. *Question* here = speech.—**Tyrannically**, so as to put down all different expressions of opinion.—**Clapped**, applauded.

318. **Wearing rapiers**, grown-up people.—**Goose-quills**, those little eyases.

321. **Escoted**, paid. A French word. (Cogs.: *Shot*; *scot-free*.)—**Quality**, profession.

323. **Common players**, players on the 'common (or public) stages.'

325. **Exclaim against their own succession**. The men who write for them *now* wrong them, by making them exclaim against what they are themselves afterwards to be.

326. **Much to-do** = much ado.

327. **Tarre**, egg on.

328. **Argument**, the plot of the play. The heading of each of the books of *Paradise Lost* is called *The Argument*.

332. **Carry it away, carry off the palm.**
333. **Hercules.** Rosencrantz takes the question in a different sense; and, as Steevens suggests, he alludes to the sign of the Globe Theatre—which was Hercules carrying the round earth.
334. **Mine uncle is king.** This central disaster accounts, in Hamlet's mind, for everything that is wrong.
335. **Make mows,** pull faces, make grimaces.
336. **Picture in little** = miniature.
341. **Appurtenance,** that which properly belongs or appertains to.
342. **Comply with you in this garb,** show you ceremonious courtesy in this way.—**Extent,** elaborate kindness.
343. **Show fairly outward,** have an attractive appearance.
348. **Hernsaw,** an abbreviation of *heronshaw*, a dialectic form of *heron*. Hamlet alludes to the sport of hawking. If a heron is started, he would probably fly with the wind; if the wind is N.N.W., he would fly to the south; and the rays of the sun would make it difficult to distinguish the hawk from the heron. If the wind were south, the heron would fly north; and, as the sun would be at the back of the sportsman, it would be easy to distinguish both birds. Hamlet means that he is only partially mad. Cl. P. S.
349. **Well** = good.
353. **Happily** for *haply*.
356. **You say right.** This is said to keep Polonius from fancying they have been talking about him.
360. **Roscius,** a great actor at Rome, in 70 B.C. He taught Cicero to speak. Good actors were proverbially called *Roscii*.
362. **Buz, buz.** Blackstone says, '*Buz* used to be an interjection at Oxford when any one began a story that was generally known before.'
364. **Then came**—a line from a forgotten ballad.
367. **Scene individable,** a play in which the *unity of place* is strictly adhered to.
368. **Poem unlimited,** a play in which neither the *unity of place* nor of *time* is observed.

368. **Seneca**, the author of several tragedies in Latin—one of three persons who bear the name.—**Plautus**, a Roman play-writer, twenty of whose plays are still extant.

371. **Jephthah** (see Judges, xi. and xii.) The old song from which Hamlet quotes is to be found in Percy's *Reliques*.

381. **Follows**. The two senses of coming after and of following, as a conclusion, are played upon.

387. **Chanson**, song—but used affectedly, in ridicule of Polonius.

388. **Abridgment**, used in two senses, that which cuts one short, and a pastime—dramatic performance, or other.

391. **Valanced**, fringed with a beard. (A *valance* is the higher hangings of a bed.)

394. **Chopine**, 'a high cork shoe.' It was really a cork or wooden heel, sometimes from ten to eighteen inches high.

395. **Cracked within the ring**. Douce says, 'There was a ring or circle on the coin, within which the sovereign's head was placed; if the crack extended from the edge beyond the ring, the coin was rendered unfit for currency.'

396. **French falconers**, who will go at anything from an eagle to a wren—at game or not-game.

398. **Passionate**, full of passion or emotion.

402. **Caviare**, sturgeon's roe—a great dainty.—**The general**, the public, the 'masses.'

404. **In the top of mine**, were superior to mine.

405. **Modesty**, moderation and good taste.

406. **Cunning**, skill.—**No sallets**. 'Nothing that gave a relish to the lines as salads do to meat.'

408. **Indict**, accuse.

410. **Handsome than fine**. *Handsome* denotes natural beauty: *fine*, that given by conscious art.

411. **Thereabout** = in that part. We still say *his whereabouts*.

414. **The Hyrcanian beast**, the tiger. Hyrcania was the name of that part of Persia which lies south of the Caspian.

416. The following lines are written in a highly elaborate style, so as to throw them well out from the back-

ground of the play, the diction of which is to be taken as that of real life.

418. **The ominous horse**, the Trojan horse, designed by Ulysses, built of wood and filled with Greek warriors. *Ominous* means here *fatal*.

421. **Gules**, the heraldic term for *red*. From Lat. *gula*, the mouth—from the color of the open mouth.—**Trick'd**, fantastically painted.

423. **Impasted** = covered over as with a paste. The only instance of the word.—**The parching streets** = the dry dust of the streets.

426. **O'er-sized**, covered over with *size*—a weak solution of glue.

435. **Unequal** for *unequally*.

438. **Ilium**, Troy. (Hence the *Story of Troy* is called the *Iliad*.)

442. **Milky** for *milk-white*.

444. **Painted tyrant**. Malone says, 'S. had in his mind the tremendous personages often represented in old tapestry, whose uplifted arms stick in the air, and do nothing.'

445. **Neutral**, taking no part in the contest.—**Matter**, what he had to do.

447. **Against** = before the coming of, on the approach of.

448. **Rack**, the body of clouds in the sky.

451. **Region**, the sky.

452. **A-work** = to work.

454. **Proof**, power of resistance.—**Eterne**. S. has this form only twice.

455. **Remorse**, pity.

459. **Fellies**, fellowes, the parts of which the ring of the wheel is composed.

464. **He's for a jig**, he would like a jig brought in here.

466. **Mobled**, muffled up. There is a kind of women's cap called a *mob-cap*—'a full high cap.'

470. **Bisson rheum**, blinding tears.

472. **O'er-teem'd**, that had borne many children.

479. **Instant**, instantaneous.

481. **Milch** = milk-giving; hence *tearful*.

482. **Passion** = sorrow or compassion.

486. **Bestowed**, lodged.

487. **Abstracts**, epitomes.

491. **Odd's bodikins** (by the body of God), a reference to the wafer in the sacrament.

492. **After** = according to.—**Use them after your own honor**, etc.—the key-note to the character of a gentleman.

497. **Can you play**. The pronoun changes from *thou* to *you*. *You* = You and your company.

510. **Peasant slave**. Most probably serfs—*ascripti glebæ*—still existed in England in S.'s time.

513. **Conceit**, thought, conception.

514. **Her working** = the working of his soul.

516. **Whole function**, the action of every member of the body.

517. **Conceit** = conception of the character he was representing.

521. **Cue**, the word or phrase to be carried on by the next speaker.

523. **The general ear**, the ear of the public.

524. **Free** from guilt of remorse of conscience.

525. **Amaze**, confound.

527. **Muddy-mettled**, irresolute.—**Rascal**, formerly the name for a lean deer, 'one fit neither to hunt nor to kill.'—**Peak**, mope.

528. **John-a-dreams** = John of dreams, or John the Dreamer. Cf. *Jack-a-lantern*.—**Unpregnant**, not quickened with, nor inspired by.

530. **Property** = everything that was *proprium* to him as a king and as a man.

531. **Defeat was made** = was destroyed.

537. **Pigeon-liver'd**. S. has also *lily-liver'd*, *white liver'd*, and *milk-liver'd*.—**Gall to make oppression bitter**. The larger part of all unhappiness comes from within.

539. **The region kites** = the kites of the sky.

541. **Kindless**, opposed to *kindly* in the phrase in the Prayer-Book, 'the kindly fruits of the earth.'

548. **About!** = *To work!*

554. **Organ**, natural instrument.



557. **Tent** = probe. (From Lat. *tentare*, to try.)—**Blench**, start, or flinch.

563. **Abuses**, deceives.

564. **Relative**, conclusive, more to the purpose. The only instance of the adjective in this sense.

### ACT THIRD.

#### SCENE 1.

1. **Circumstance** = round-aboutness.

3. **Grating**, irritating.

7. **Forward**, very ready.

8. **Keeps**. The nominative must be taken out of *him*.

12. **Disposition**, mood.

14. **Assay him to** = invite him to and assay (*test*) him by ? or, try his inclination for.

17. **O'er-raught** = overtook. *Raught* is the past of *reach* (the *ch* having been at one time a pure guttural).

26. **Edge**, egging on. *Egg*, to instigate, and *edge* are two forms of the same word.

29. **Closely** = secretly.

31. **Affront** = confront. S. has also, *To affront his eye*.

32. **Lawful espials**, spies with a right to spy.

40. **Wildness**, madness.

43. **Gracious**—spoken to the king.

45. **Color** = give some color to.

47. **'Tis too much prov'd**, too frequently experienced.

55. **In the mind** belongs to *suffer*.

57. **Take arms against a sea**. This has been frequently objected to as a mixed metaphor, like Lord Castlereagh's, 'I will now embark upon the point on which this question mainly hinges.' But it is a sufficient reply to say that the phrase 'sea of troubles' is a stereotyped phrase, and does not belong to the same level of expression as *take arms*.

59. **No more** = nothing more.

61. **Consummation**, ending.

63. **The rub**, a metaphor taken from the game of bowls. If the bowl is turned from its course by something on the green, it is called a *rub*.

65. **Mortal coil** = the entanglement of this body.

66. Give us pause, compel us to stop.—**Respect**, consideration.

67. Of so long life. "The consideration that induces us to undergo the calamity of so long life."

68. Of time = of the world.

72. Takes = puts up with.

73. A legal term for the settlement of an account. *Quietus est*, he is quiet = discharged. (The same idea is contained in the word *acquit*, which is from Lat. *quietus*; and in *pay*, from Lat *pacare*, to bring to peace.)

74. Bare bodkin, an unsheathed dagger. But Dr. Schmidt explains it as = merely a.—**Fardels**, the older Fr. form of *fardeau*, a pack or burden.

75. Grunt, a strong cognate of groan; as snort is of snore. *Grunt* had not in S.'s time the lower meaning which it now has.—**Weary**, from *wear*.

77. Bourn, limit or boundary. The *r* seems to be intrusive and inorganic; and *bourn* is a doublet of *bound*.

78. Puzzles, a continuative or frequentative from *pose*.

82. The native hue, the healthy color natural to.

83. Cast, tinge, coloring. The only passage where the word is used in this sense.—**Thought**, anxious reflection. S. sometimes uses *thought* for sorrow.

86. The name = even the name.—**Soft you now**, Hush!

87. Orisons, prayers. *Orison* is a doublet, through Fr., of *oration* (from *orare*, to pray). Cf. *benison* and *benediction*.

91. Remembrances, souvenirs, mementos.

97. Their perfume = the sweet odor of the words.

99. Wax, grow.

107. Commerce, conversation.

115. Relish of it, have some flavor of it.

119. Indifferent = fairly.

122. At my beck, ever ready to swarm round me at the smallest suggestion.

135. Monsters = monstrosities. Both S. and Milton use *monster* in the literal Latin sense of *monstrum*, something to be pointed at (from *monstrāre*, to show).

140. Jig = walk as if dancing a jig.—**Nickname**

(here used for *misname* or *miscall*), a corruption of an *ekename*, "an additional name," the *n* having dropped away from the article.

147. **Expectancy** = the hope. The only passage where the word is so used.—**Rose** = flower.—**Fair**, used prophetically—because made *fair* by the rose.

148. **Mould of form** = model of beauty (like Lat. *forma*, beauty).

149. **Of all observers** = by.

152. **Sovereign**, supreme—that ought to be above all. (*Sovereign* is a conventional misspelling; on the mistaken notion that it comes from Lat. *regnum*, a kingdom. It comes from Late Lat. *superaneus*; and Milton always spells *sovrán* and *sovranty*.)

154. **Blown** = in its bloom, in full blow.

155. **Ecstasy**, madness.

160. **On brood**, brooding.

161. **Doubt**, fear.—**Disclose**, 'the technical term for the young birds chipping their shell.'

162. **For to**. Dr. Abbott (sect. 152) says, '*For to* was very common in Early English and A. S., and is not uncommon in the Elizabethan writers. It probably owes its origin to the fact that the prepositional meaning of *to* was gradually weakened as it came to be considered nothing but the sign of the infinitive. Hence, *for* was added to give the notion of motion or purpose.' Cf. Luke, vii. 24: 'What went ye out for to see?'

167. **Variable** = various.

168. **Something-settled** = somewhat settled, having a tolerably fixed position.

170. **Fashion of himself** = his usual behavior.

179. **In the ear** = within hearing.

180. **Find** = find out or detect his secret.

## SCENE 2.

2. **Trippingly**. Hamlet is anxious that there should be no halting or imperfection in the recital of the speech he has written.

3. **I had as lief** = I would as soon. *Lief* is an adj. (O. E. or A. S., *leaf*, dear; H. Ger. *lieb*.)—**I had** is not the

indicative, but the subjunctive (cf. H. Ger. *hätte*) = *I would have*; and the older form of the phrase was, *Me were as lief* = *It were as dear to me*.

6. **Temperance**, moderation.

8. **Robustious**, sturdy and violent.—**Periwig-pated**. In S.'s time, wigs were worn only by actors; and they did not come into general use until the end of the seventeenth century, in the reign of Charles II.

9. **Groundlings**, the hearers (who paid one penny for their standing-room) in the pit, which in S.'s time contained neither floor nor benches.

10. **Capable of nothing**, understand nothing.—**Inexplicable** = unintelligible.

12. **Termagant**, a character in the old mystery-plays—a scolding god of the 'Saracens.'—**Ont-herods**. *Herod* was also a favorite character in the mystery-plays. A stage-direction in one of these old plays was 'Here Erode ragis.'

16. **Modesty**, moderation.

17. **From the purpose** = away from.

21. **Pressure**, character, expression.—**Come tardy off**, dully and inefficiently represented.

23. **Censure**, judgment.

24. **There be**. Dr. Abbott (sect. 300) says, '*Be* is much more common with the plural than with the singular.'

31. **Indifferently**, fairly well.

36. **Barren**, opposed to 'fertile' brains (like H. Ger. *geistreich*).

48. **Conversation**, intercourse with human beings.—**Cop'd**, met, had to do with. (*Cope* is really another form—or doublet—of *chop*, to exchange. Cogs.: *Cheap*, a market; *chap*; *chapman*; *Chipping Norton*; *Copenhagen*; *Kippen*; *Chippenhams*; H. Ger. *Kaufen*.)

53. **Candied tongue**, sugared over, flattering tongue.

54. **Crook**. The nominative to *crook* is *tongue*—a violent case of mixed metaphor.—**Pregnant** = ready to bow.

55. **Thrift** (from *thrive*), gain or success.

57. **Of men distinguish**. S. has also *distinguish of colors*.

62. **Blood and judgment** = emotions and intellect, passion and reason.

63. **Pipe.** Hamlet uses the same metaphor in line 330.  
 67. **Something too much.** This single sentence, the self-restraint of it, and the thoughtfulness, moderation, and sanity of this whole speech, utterly upset all the theories about Hamlet's so-called 'madness.'

71. **A-foot,** going on.

72. **With the very comment,** with the most intimate and real intuition of thy mind.

73. **Occulted,** carefully concealed. The only instance of the word.

74. **Unkennel itself,** come out of its hole. (*Kennel* is from Low Lat *canile*, a place for dogs; just as *ovile* came from *ovis*, a sheep.)

77. **Stithy,** smithy. The *stithy* is the place where the *stith* or anvil stands. It is a cognate of *stead* (in *bedstead*), *steady*, etc.—**Heedful note,** notice full of *head* or care.

80. **In censure of his seeming,** in forming an opinion of how he looked.

82. **Pay the theft** = pay for what is stolen.

83. **Idle,** light-headed (again)—so as to throw them off the scent.

85. **Fares** = is. Cf. the phrases: *How fares the king?* *fare you well; how well she fares.* But Hamlet intentionally misunderstands it in the sense of *feeds*.

86. **The chameleon** was supposed to live on air.

88. **Have nothing with this answer** = this is no answer.

90. **In the university.** The practice of acting Latin plays in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge is very ancient, and continued to nearly the middle of last century.

94. **Julius Cæsar.** A Latin play on this subject was acted at Christ Church College, Oxford, in 1582.—**The Capitol.** But Cæsar was not killed there; it was in the Council-house of Pompey (*Curia Pompeii*) that he fell.

98. **Stay upon** = await.

110. **Within's** = within this.

113. **Sabell,** "from French *isabelle*, is a color between white and yellow."

116. **Not thinking on** = oblivion.—**The hobby-horse,** a figure in the old May-day games and Morrice-dances,

which were put down by the Puritans. The legs of the horse were represented by the legs of the man.

119. **Miching Mallecho**, secret, sneaking mischief. *Malhecho* (Spanish) = an evil action. (From Lat. *male*, ill, and *factum*, done. The Lat. *f* becomes in Spanish *h*, as in *filius* and *hijo*.)

120. **Belike**, probably, or I suppose.—**Argument**, plot.

121. **The players cannot keep counsel**, if (or though) the king can.

129. **Posy**, motto.

132. **Cart**, chariot. The whole speech is written in archaic English, and in a somewhat bombastic style. *Phœbus' cart* = the sun.

133. **Salt wash** = the sea.—**Tellus**, the Earth (personified).

134. **Sheen**, light. It is the noun from *shine*. S. has also *starlight sheen*.

137. **Commutual**, a strong form of *mutual*.

140. **Woe is me**. The dative.

141. **Cheer** = cheerfulness.

142. **Distrust you** = fear for you.

144. **Holds**, the old Northern plural. There were, in English, down to the fourteenth century, three ways of making the plural: Northern, in *es*, as *we hopes*; Midland, in *en*, *we hopen*; Southern, in *th*, *we hopeth*. Of these, the first two survived to S.'s time; and even the last is found in *doth* and *hath*.—**Holds quantity** = are in exact proportion.

145. **In neither aught** = nothing in either.—**In extremity** = in extreme measure.

148. **Littlest**. *Gooder*, *goodest*; *badder* and *baddest*, are found in Elizabethan writers.

151. **Operant**, active.—**Leave for** *leave off*.—**To do** = to perform.

158. **Wormwood**, for the king.

159. **Instances**, inducements.—**Move**, form the motive for.

160. **Respects of thrift**, considerations of economy.

162. **Break**, pronounced *breek*. In Lancashire people still say *breekfast*.

163. **The slave to memory.** We keep our purpose only so long as we remember it.

164. **Validity**, strength, worth.

166. **Fall, unshaken** = falls without shaking. The construction suddenly changes, influenced probably by the collective noun *fruit*.

167. **Most necessary**, quite unavoidable.

168. **To ourselves**, alone.

172. **Enactures**, resolutions.

173. The disposition that is capable of the highest joy is also, etc.

176. **Our loves** = our lovers or friends.

184. **Seasons.** The 'trial' of the hollow friend brings his hidden hostility to ripeness.

193. **Desperation**, despair.

194. **An anch'ret's cheer**, an anchorite's fare. *Ancor* is the O. E. form. The word is from Gr. *anachōrētēs*, one who has separated himself from others.—**My scope**, the utmost limit of my enjoyment.

195. **Opposite**, contrary thing. In S. it generally means *opponent*.—**Blanks**, blanches or pales. The only instance of the verb.

207. **Is there no offence in't?** But the king had seen the 'dumb show,' and must have known the plot of the play to be acted. Halliwell supposes that 'the king and the queen may have been directed to whisper confidentially to each other during the dumb-show, and so escape the sight of it.'

211. **Tropically**, metaphorically. (A *trope* is a *turning* of a word from one use to another; a *tropic* is a *turning-line*, from which the sun appears to begin to go back. From Gr. *trepō*, I turn.)

212. **Image**, representation.

216. **Our withers are unwrung**, our shoulders are free from pain.

218. **A chorus**, which explained or commented on the action of the play in Greek tragedies.

219. **Interpret.** The interpreter at a puppet-show sat on the stage and explained the proceedings to the audience.

223. '**The croaking raven.**' A quotation from an old play.
226. **Confederate season**, the time being in conspiracy with the murderer.
230. **Wholesome**, healthy. (The *w* in *whole* is inorganic, as it comes from *heal*.)—**Usurp.** The nominatives are *magic* and *property*.
235. **False fire**, blank cartridge.
244. **Feathers** were much worn on the stage in the time of S.
245. **Turn Turk** = turn completely round (for the worse), as from a Christian to a Mussulman.—**Provincial** for *Provençal*. The roses were rosettes of ribbon.
246. **Razed**, slashed.—**Cry**, company. Generally applied to a *pack of hounds*.
247. **Half a share**. The actors in S.'s time had not annual salaries, but shares, a share, or part of a share, in the venture.
249. **Damon**. Hamlet here gives the name of *Damon* to Horatio—an allusion to the old classical story of the close friends, Damon and Pythias.
252. **Pajock** = (he avoids the word *ass*) peacock, probably corrupt for *patchcock*, a clown.
255. **Pound**, the O. E. plural, as in *stone, deer, fish, year, winter, summer*, which had no mark for the plural number.
259. **Recorders**, a kind of flageolet.
261. **Perdy**, a corruption of *par Dieu*.
267. **Distempered**, put out, discomposed.
268. **With drink**. Hamlet intentionally misunderstands.
269. **Choler**, anger. From Gr. *cholos*, the bile.
271. **Purgation**, in both the legal and the medical sense of the word.
273. **Frame**, order and form.
274. **My affair** = the business I bring before you.
275. **Pronounce**, speak out.
280. **Wholesome**, sane, sensible.
281. **Pardon**, leave to go.
290. **Amazement**, great trouble of mind.—**Admiration**, wonder.
296. **Trade**, business. Hamlet purposely selects the lower word.



298. **So**, with a double sense—in the same way, just as much as I ever did.—**Pickers and stealers**, hands, which the Church Catechism warns must be kept from picking and stealing.

299. **Your cause of** = the cause of your.

305. **Grows**, the steed starves.—**Something**, somewhat.

307. **To withdraw with you** = to speak a word in private with you.

308. **Go about**, do what you can.—**To recover the wind**, to get to windward, as if I were a deer, and you were stalking me. A hunting term.

309. **Toil**, net. (*Toil*, to labor, is an *English* word, connected with *till*; *toil*, a net, is from Fr. *toile*, from Lat. *tela*, a web.)

319. **Ventages**, wind-holes. (From Lat. *ventus*, wind. Cog., *Ventilation*.)

325. **Seem to know**, put on the appearance of knowing.

331. **Fret**, probably used in two senses. *Frets* are stops or small lengths of wire fastened on to serve as guides to the fingers.

341. **By and by** = at once. The procrastination natural to the human race has given a meaning of *delay* both to this phrase and to *presently*.

342. **To the top of my bent**—probably a metaphor from a bow. To the highest pitch.

352. **Nero**, who murdered his mother, Agrippina.

356. **Shent** (past participle from *shend*, Cf. H. Ger. *Schande*, shame), rebuked, made to feel ashamed.

357. **To give them seals** = to seal or confirm them by acts.

### SCENE 3.

2. **Range**, have free scope and play.

5. **The terms of our estate**, the condition of our power.

8. **Most holy . . . fear** = it is our duty to feel anxious about.

11. **Single and peculiar life** = private person.

13. **'Noyance**, injury.

14. **Weal** (wealth), welfare. Cf. the Prayer-Book, 'Grant her in health and wealth long to live.'

15. **The cease of majesty** = the king dying. (The only instance of *cease* as a noun.) S. is very fond of using the abstract for the concrete.

16. **Gulf**, whirlpool.

17. **Massy** = massive. S. never has *massive*; nor has Milton.

20. **Mortis'd**. A mortise is a hole cut in one piece of timber to receive the *tenon* of another piece.

21. **Annexment**. The only instance of the word.

22. **Ruin**, the act of falling. (The primary sense of Lat. *ruina*.)

25. **Fear** for the object of *fear*. See note on line 15.

29. **Process**, proceedings.—**Tax**, reprove.—**Home**, to the quick.

31. **More audience**, other hearers.

33. **Of vantage**, from an advantageous (concealed) position.

39. **Sharp**, as strong and eager.

41. **Double business**, two pieces of business.

47. **To confront the visage**, to stand face to face with.

49. **Forestall'd**, prevented.

54. **Effects**, properties—such as the crown, etc.

55. **Ambition**, the position I was ambitious to have. Like *offence* in the next line, which is = the advantages gained by it.

57. **Currents . . . hand**. A mixed metaphor.

59. **The wicked prize**, the gain got by wickedness.

61. **There**, emphatic.—**Lies**, in the legal sense—as when we say, *An action can lie or cannot lie*.

64. **Rests** = Lat. *Quid restat*? What remains?

68. **Lim'd** = caught (as with bird-lime).

69. **Engag'd**, entangled.—**Make assay** = try your utmost.

75. **Would be scann'd**. Requires examination.

79. **Grossly**, when in a gross (unshrived) condition.—**Full of bread**. So in Ezekiel, xvi. 49, the sin of Sodom is said to have been 'pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness.'

80. **Flush**, in the prime, full of vigor.  
 81. **Audit**, examination of his accounts—the debit and credit sides.  
 82. **Our circumstance**. *Circumstance* = the details we can run over.  
 83. **'Tis heavy**. He has a *heavy* reckoning.  
 84. **To take him** = by taking him.  
 85. **Passage** to the other world. 'The bell tolled at the death of a person was called the 'passing-bell.'  
 86. **Hent**, grip. 'A more fell grasp on the villain.' (The verb *hentan* gives *hand*, *hunt*, etc.)  
 91. **This physio**, 'this forbearance of mine merely puts off the end.'

## SCENE 4.

1. **Straight** = straightway.  
 2. **Broad**, too strong or unrestrained.  
 4. **Heat**, anger (the king's).—**'Sconce** for ensconce.  
 14. **Rood** = the holy rood or cross. A common oath.  
 21. **Wilt thou do?** There was nothing in Hamlet's words to alarm the queen; it was probably his manner.  
 34. **Busy**, in the sense it has in *busy-body*—officious.  
 39. **Proof** = armor of proof.—**Sense** = feeling. So *not sensible of fire* meant *feeling no heat*.  
 46. **Dicers**, gamblers (with dice).  
 47. **Contraction** = the act of undertaking the marriage-contract.  
 49. **Glow** with shame.  
 50. **Solidity** = solid mass of the earth.—**Compound** = composite.  
 51. **Tristful**, a hybrid, *trist* (from *tristis*, sorrowful) being Lat., and *ful* English.—**As against the doom**, as if doomsday were at hand.  
 52. **Thought-sick** = sick with misery.  
 53. **The index** was; in S.'s time, placed at the beginning of the book.  
 55. **Counterfeit**, generally used by S. as a noun, in the sense of *portrait*.—**Presentment** = representation.  
 59. **Station**, attitude.  
 66. **Wholesome** = healthy.

68. **Batten**, grow fat (connected with *bet* in *better*; cf. also *boot* = profit, in *bootless*, to *boot*).

70. **Heyday**, frolic and gaiety. Only here used as a noun.

71. **Waits upon**, follows.

74. **Apoplex'd**, paralyzed as with a stroke of apoplexy. The only instance of the verb.—**Would not err**. The *so* of the next line belongs also to *err*.

76. **Some quantity**, however small. The *some* is emphatic.

77. **To serve** = to be of use in a case where the *difference* was so very striking.

78. **Cozen'd**, cheated. Said to come from *coz*—the contraction of *cousin*—hence = to treat a person as a relation for the purpose of advantage.—**Hoodman-blind** = blind-man's-buff.

82. **Mope**, be so dull and stupid.

91. **Grained** = dyed in grain. Originally *grain* (from Lat. *granum*, a seed) was restricted to the dye *kermes*, obtained from the *coccus* insect—a scarlet dye; but it was afterwards applied to any thoroughly fast dye.

92. **Leave their tinct** = give up their color. (Now spelled *tint*.)

94. **In** = into. Like modern H. Ger., *in* in older English meant *into* as well as *in*.

96. **The tithe** = the tenth part.—**A vice** = a clown. In the old Morality-plays—which took the place of the older *Mystery-plays*—Vices and Virtues were personified; and the VICE took the place of SATAN. The modern clown is the representative of the *Vice*.

98. **Cutpurse**. Purses were attached to the girdle, and hung outside—as ladies now carry their pockets.

99. **From a shelf**—like an area sneak.

101. **Shreds and patches**, the motley dress of the clown. 'Just when Hamlet's rage is on the verge of becoming impotent and verbose, it is restored to overpowering grandeur by the Ghost's reappearance, who with divine compassion interferes to save his erring wife from distraction.'

106. **Laps'd in time and passion**, having let time go by and spent my force in passion and words.

107. **Important acting**, urgent carrying out.
111. **Amazement**, trouble and distractedness.
113. **Conceit**, imagination. In S., *conceit* means *idea*; *invention*; *mental faculty*; *imagination*; but never has the modern sense.
117. **Incorporal** for *incorporeal*, immaterial.
119. **The alarm**, the call to arms; from Italian *all' armē*.
120. **Bedded**, laid flat.—**Excrements**, excrescences or outgrowths—like hair and the nails. Used—like so many other words—in its primary sense by S.; from Lat. *ex*, out of, and *crescere*, to grow (cf. *increment*, from *increscere*).
126. **Capable** of understanding and acting.
128. **Stern effects**, the effects my sternness must bring about.
134. **In his habit as** = in the dress he used to wear when alive.
142. **Re-word**, go over again word for word.
143. **Gambol from**, skip and run from.—**For love** = for the love. Dr. Abbott (sect. 89) says, 'The was frequently omitted before a noun already defined by another noun, especially in prepositional phrases.'
150. **Compost** and *composture*, used by S. for *manure*.
152. **Pursy** (bagging out like a well-filled purse), puffed up with pride and prosperity.
154. **Curb and woo** = bow and beg. *Curb* is used in its primary sense, from Fr. *courber*, to bend.
159. **Assume**, not in the modern sense; but in the primary Latin sense of *assumo*—put on, take to yourself (as you would a dress).
160. **Sense doth eat**, eats away gradually or destroys the original meaning of actions. S. is fond of using *eat* in this sense.
164. **Aptly** = with an easy fit—made easier by custom, who in this respect is an angel.—**Put on**. This fully explains the meaning of the word *assume*.
167. **Use . . . change . . . nature**. 'Custom is a second nature.'
170. **To be bless'd by God** = when you have repented.
171. **For** = as for.

174. **Their**, referring to *heaven*. In several passages, S. regards *heaven* as a plural.

175. **Bestow**, stow away.—**Answer**, account for.

181. **Bloat** for *bloated*.

182. **To ravel . . . out** = to unravel.

183. **Essentially am not** = am not essentially or really.

186. **Paddock**, toad. From O. E. *padde*, a toad or a frog. The -*ock* is a diminutive termination (as in hillock, etc.)  
—**Gib**, a tom-cat. From *Gilbert*. The she-cat was called *Graymalkin*—*Malkin* being a diminution of *Mall* or *Moll* = *Mary*.

187. **Concernings**, concerns.

189-192. It has been conjectured that there existed a story about an ape, who opened a basket containing live pigeons, got into the basket himself, 'tried conclusions'—whether he could fly like them, and so broke his neck.

191. **Conclusions**, experiments.

202. **Engineer**. S. has also the forms *engineer*, *pioneer*, *mutiner*, *pulpiter*, etc.

203. **Hoist** for *hoisted*.—**Petar**, a kind of grenade for breaking open gates.

206. **Crafts**. Two secret mines meet.

211. **Toward an end**, a mocking reference to Polonius's old interminable speeches.

**Severally** = in different directions.

## ACT FOURTH.

### SCENE I.

1. **Profound**, deep. But the other sense of *profound* suggests to S. the word *translate*.

11. **Brainish**, imaginary; the apprehension exists only in his brain.

18. **Kept short**, under control.—**Out of haunt** = away from the company of others.

22. **Divulging** = being divulged.

25. **Ore**, always used by S. in the sense of *a vein of gold*.

26. **Mineral** = a mine.

36. **Speak fair** = (speak him fair) gently or kindly.

40. **Untimely** (an adverb), used by S. of *violent death*.

41. **O'er the world's diameter**, to the very ends of the earth.

42. **Blank** (= blanch), white mark.

43. **Shot**. A whisper transporting a shot (which is poisoned) is another instance of mixed metaphor.

45. **Discord**. The different powers of his soul are fighting against each other.

### SCENE 2.

11. **Demanded of** = questioned by—**Replication**, reply or echo.

14. **Countenance**, patronage.

15. **Authorities** = offices of authority.

17. **Mouthed**, put in his mouth. The only instance of the word in this sense.

21. **Sleeps**. S. often uses *sleep* to denote a state of idleness or uselessness.

24. **With the king** = 'lies at his door'; but the king is not with the body—as he really deserves to be (that is, he should be dead like him).

26. **Of nothing**, of no value.—**Hide fox, and all after!** The signal used by school-boys in those days for beginning the game of *Hide-and-seek*.

### SCENE 3.

6. **Scourge**, punishment.

9. **Deliberate pause**, not a sudden measure, but the result of deliberate arrangement.

21. **Politic worms**. Probably one of S.'s plays upon words—an allusion to the German Imperial Diets held at Worms.

24. **Variable** for *various*.

30. **A progress**, a royal state-journey.

33. **Send**, for *you cannot go*.

35. **Nose**, smell. S. takes the liberty of using any noun as a verb if it happen to make his statements more expressive.

40. **Tender**, have a regard for.—**Dearly**, heartily.

42. **With fiery quickness** = 'in hot haste.'

43. **At help**, ready to assist.

44. **Tend**, attend.  
 52. **At foot**, close to his steps. Cl. P. S.  
 55. **Leans on**, depends on.  
 56. **At aught** = at any price at all.  
 58. **Cicatrice**; from Lat. *cicatricem*, a scar.  
 59. **Free awe**, awe spontaneously accorded.  
 60. **Coldly set**, regard with indifference.  
 61. **Process**, procedure.  
 62. **Conjuring** = adjuring. We frequently find in S. the phrase, 'I do conjure thee.'  
 63. **Present**, immediate.  
 64. **Hectic**, fever.

## SCENE 4.

6. **Express our duty**, give expression to our homage and reverence.—**In his eye**, in his presence.  
 8. **Softly**, slowly—an order to his soldiers, not to the captain.  
 9. **Powers**, forces.  
 15. **The main**, the whole country.  
 20. **Five** = but five.—**Farm**, take it on lease.  
 22. **Ranker**, richer, greater.—**In fee**, out and out, with absolute possession.  
 26. **Debate** = decide. (The literal meaning of *debattre*, to beat down thoroughly.)  
 27. **Imposthume**, internal abscess.  
 34. **Market of his time**, that for which he *markets* or exchanges his time.  
 36. **Large discourse**, wide range of discursive inquiry and reasoning.  
 39. **Fust**, grow fusty or mouldy.  
 40. **Bestial oblivion**, forgetfulness such as one might expect from the lower animals.—**Craven**, cowardly.  
 41. **Scruple of thinking**, which consists in thinking.—**Event**, issue, outcome of one's actions.  
 46. **Gross**, palpable, obvious. ('Hamlet envies every one who has quick and determined resolution, and whose energy does not, like his own, evaporate in meditation, and pass by opportunity after opportunity for action.'—MOBERLY.)



47. **Charge**, cost.  
 49. **Puff'd**, inspired.  
 50. **Makes mouths**, mocks.—**Invisible event**, the issue which he cannot see.  
 51. **Unsure**, insecure.  
 54. **Argument**, subject (of dispute).  
 61. **Fantasy and trick of fame**, an imaginary point of honor. A hendiadys.  
 63. **Cannot try** = cannot find room to try.  
 64. **Continent**, in the primary sense of the Lat. *continentem* = *that which contains*. Cf. *Midsummer*, II. i.: 'They (the rivers) have overborne their continents.'

## SCENE 5.

6. **Spurns**, kicks out of her way.—**Enviously**, angrily, spitefully.  
 8. **Unshaped**, formless.  
 9. **Collection**, in the literal Latin sense of *colligo*, I gather (from the stray words she utters) what she means.—**Aim at it**, 'take a shot' at the meaning.  
 10. **Botch**, patch, fill in between the gaps.  
 13. **Nothing sure**, clear, certain, or thoroughly ascertained.  
 15. **Ill-breeding**, hatching mischief (*ill* is a noun).  
 18. **Toy**, trifle.—**Amiss**, disaster. (The whole atmosphere of the court is charged with misery, fear, and sense of guilt and wrong.)  
 19. **Artless**, unskilful.—**Jealousy**, suspicion.  
 20. **Spills**, destroys.  
 25. **Cockle-hat**. The cockle-shell in the hat was the badge of a pilgrim.  
 26. **Shoon**, a plural archaic even in S.'s time. Spenser, also archaically, has *teen*. (Sir Joshua Reynolds says, 'There is no part of the play more pathetic than this scene, which, I suppose, proceeds from the utter insensibility Ophelia has to her own misfortunes. A great sensibility, or none at all, seems to produce the same effect. In the latter, the audience supply what she wants, and with the former they sympathize.')  
 37. **Larded**, garnished.

38. **Bewept.** One of the functions of *be* is to turn intransitive verbs into transitive. Cf. *bemoan*, *bewail*, etc.

41. **God'ield** = God yield or reward you.—**Baker's daughter.** There is a story once current in Gloucestershire that our Saviour went into a baker's shop to ask for bread. The mistress was about to give him what he wanted, when her daughter interrupted her with scolding, and for this lack of charity was transformed into an owl.

45. **Of this** = about this.

63. **Remove** for *removal*.—**Muddied, thick**, etc., referring to the blood—and to the mood of the people.

65. **Greenly**, foolishly.

66. **In hugger-mugger**, in secrecy and hurriedly. The only instance of the word.

69. **As much containing**, of as much importance.

71. **Keeps himself in clouds**, is mysterious and reserved in his conduct.

72. **Buzzers**, whisperers.

74. **Wherein** = in which pestilent speeches, **necessity** (the necessity under which the accuser lies to make good his charge), having no proper data, will not stick at arraigning even us in every ear.

77. **A murdering-piece**, a cannon loaded with case-shot, a sort of rude *mitrailleuse*.

79. **Switzers.** Swiss Guards served in France, Spain, Italy, and other countries; and, as having no connection with any local faction, could be thoroughly trusted. To this day the Pope's bodyguard consists chiefly of Swiss soldiers.

81. **Overpeering of his list**, looking over (rising above) his boundary.

87. **Of every word**, of everything that is to serve as a watchword to the nation.

92. **Counter.** Hounds *run counter* when they trace the scent backwards.

108. **Demand his fill**, ask questions to his heart's content.

111. **Thoroughly** = thoroughly.

112. **My will** shall stay me—nothing else.

117. **Swoopstake.** The winner sweeps or draws the whole of the stakes.

122. **Repast**, feed. The only instance of the word.  
 125. **Sensibly**, feelingly.  
 126. **As level**. The metaphor is taken from the custom of point-blank firing.  
 130. **Virtue**, power. We still have the phrase *by virtue of*.  
 136. **Fine**, tender.  
 137. **Instance**, example or specimen. The notion seems to be that Ophelia's wits have gone after her dead father.  
 146. **The wheel**. She fancies herself singing to the spinning-wheel.—**The false steward**. This story has not come down to us.  
 149. **Rosemary** was supposed to strengthen the memory. (To her brother.)  
 150. **Pansies**, from the Fr. *pensées*.  
 151. **Document**, a lesson. (Used in the primary sense of the Lat. *documentum*, something taught, from *doceo*, I teach.)  
 152. **Fennel** (the emblem of flattery) **for you**, the King. But Mr. Longfellow, in the *Goblet of Life*, says:—  
     ‘Above the lowly plants it towers,  
     The fennel with its yellow flowers,  
     And in an earlier age than ours  
     Was gifted with the wondrous powers  
     Lost reason to restore.’  
 —**Rue for you** (the Queen). It was also called *herb o’ grace*. It was believed to be good for the eyes.  
 154. **With a difference**. The Queen and Ophelia both had need to wear rue, but for different reasons.  
 155. **Violets**, the emblem of faithfulness.  
 158. **Thought**, anxiety.—**Passion**, violent sorrow.  
 159. **Favor**, charm, attractiveness.  
 170. **Of all** = on all.  
 174. **Of whom your** = of your wisest friends whom you will.  
 177. **Touch’d**, tainted by any connection with the deed—accessory in any way.  
 183. **His means of death** = the means of his death.  
 184. **Hatchment**, said to be a corruption of *achievement*.

The steps are: *Atchievement* (the heraldic name for *escutcheon* of a deceased person); *atch'ment*; *hatchment*.

185. **Ostentation**, display.

187. **That** = so that.

## SCENE 6.

8. **He shall, sir.** The gruff, friendly politeness of the sailor.

10. **Let to know**, caused to know, informed.

11. **Overlooked** = looked over. Affixes have in English very different meanings, according as they are separable or inseparable.

12. **Means** of access to, an introduction.

13. **Appointment** = equipment.

14. **Compelled**, involuntary.

17. **Thieves of mercy** = merciful robbers.

20. **Light . . . bore.** Metaphor from the *bore* or calibre of a gun; the charge is too light for a gun of such calibre — 'for the calibre of the facts.'

## SCENE 7.

1. **Acquittance** for *acquittal*, a form which S. has not.

6. **Feats**, acts. (*Feat* is a doublet—through N. Fr.—of *fact*, from Lat. *factum*, a deed.)

8. **All things else**, every other consideration.

9. **Mainly**, powerfully.

10. **Much unsinew'd**, very weak.

13. **Be it either which**, be it which of the two ('either') it may.

14. **Conjunctive**, knit.

16. **By her**, beside her.

17. **Count**, trial, account (Lat. *computare*, *comp'tare*). *Count* is also spelled *compt* by S.

18. **General**, common.—**Gender**, kind or race of men.

S. has also, *One gender of herbs*.

20. **The spring.** The dropping-well at Knaresborough in Yorkshire, which incrusts wood, etc., with a calcareous deposit.

21. **Gyves to graces**, make even his fetters into ornaments.

22. **Too slightly timber'd**, with not a heavy enough body.—**Loud**, with reference to the shouts and applause of the people.

24. **Not where** = not gone whither.

27. **May go back**, if I may praise her for what she was, but is not.

28. **Stood challenger**, stood forth and challenged.—**On mount of all the age**, on the summit of the time. Mr. Moberly says, 'The allusion seems to be to the coronation ceremony of the Emperor of Austria as King of Hungary; when, on the Mount of Defiance, at Presburg, he unsheathes the ancient sword of state, and, shaking it towards north, south, east, and west, challenges the four corners of the world to dispute his rights.'

32. **Beard be shook with** (= by). Danger coming so near us as to, etc.

43. **Set naked**, landed with all my baggage lost.

47. **Should** = can possibly.

48. **Abuse**, piece of deceit, an illusion.

50. **Character**, handwriting.

53. **Lost in it**, cannot find my way in it.

59. **So** = provided that.

61. **Checking at**. To *check at* was a term in falconry, applied to a hawk when she leaves her proper game to fly at some other bird.—**That**, a pronominal particle for *it*.

62. **Work him**, urge him gradually.

63. **Device**, scheming.

66. **Uncharge**, bring no charge against.

69. **Organ**, instrument.—**It falls right**. This notion of yours fits into my plan.

72. **Your sum of parts** (= the sum of your parts), the whole of your talents.

75. **Of the unworthiest siege**, of the lowest rank. The siege (or seat) at table denoted the rank.

79. **Weeds, importing**, clothes which indicate. Chaucer often uses *weede* for clothes; and we still have the phrase *widow's weeds*.

80. **Health**, prosperity.

83. **Can well** = have great skill. This absolute use of *can* is found seven times in S.

86. **Incorpe'd** for *incorporate*, made one body with.

87. **Topp'd**, overtopped, surpassed.

88. **In forgery**, even in conceiving or imagining. — **Shapes and tricks**, attitudes and manœuvres.

92. **The brooch** was a jewel worn in the hat, and thus very conspicuous.

94. **Confession**. Delius says that this word implies that Lamond would not willingly acknowledge the superiority of Laertes.

95. **Masterly report** = report of your masterly skill.

96. **In your defence** = in your knowledge of the art of defence.

99. **Scrimers**, fencers.

101. **Oppos'd them** = were their opponent.

110. **Love is begun by time**. The fallacy of the king's reasoning lies in the word *by*; if he had said *in*, he would have been right.

111. **Passages of proof**, events which have come within my own experience.

115. **Still** = always.

116. **Plurisy** (a *too-muchness*), from Lat. *plus* (*pluris*), more. (*Pleurisy*, the disease, is an inflammation of the *pleura*, the membrane which covers the lungs.) S. meant to say *plethora*.

117. **Too-much**, an adverb used as a noun. So we say *the why* and *the wherefore*.

121. **A spendthrift sigh**, a sigh that wastes the strength. There was in S.'s time a notion that every sigh cost the loss of a drop of blood from the heart.

122. **Hurts by easing**, injures while it gives relief.

126. **Sanctuarize**, be a sanctuary for.

133. **Remiss**, careless. The word has now an element of blame in it.

134. **Generous**, large-minded, not suspicious. — **Con-triving**, plotting (and therefore not likely to suspect plots in others).

135. **Peruse**, examine.

137. **Unbated**, unblunted (that is, without the button).

S. has *bate*, *abate*, and *rebate* in the sense of *blunt*.—A **pass of practice** = a treacherous lunge.

140. **Uction**, ointment. (The king need not have taken so much time and trouble to get at the wicked side of Laertes; his mind was already well prepared.)—**Mountebank**, a quack-doctor. (From It. *montimbanco*, one who mounts a bench to, etc.)

141. **Mortal**, deadly.

142. **Cataplasm**, poultice.

143. **Simplex**. Herbs.

144. **Under the moon**. These herbs had to be gathered by moonlight.

146. **Contagion**, the abstract for the concrete (*poison*).

—**That** = so that.

149. **Shape**, the proposed plot.

152. **Back**, a support in reserve.

153. **Blast in proof** = burst under trial. A metaphor from the testing of a gun.

154. **Cunnings**, the skill of each of you.

158. **That** represents *when*.

159. **For the nonce**, for the occasion. (A corruption of *for then anes* = *ad hoc unum*. The *n* has dropped off, and adhered to the wrong word.

160. **Stuck**, thrust. From It. *stoccata*, a term in fencing.

165. **Aslant a brook**. 'The willow grows on the banks of most of our small streams, particularly the Avon, near Stratford, and from the looseness of the soil the trees partly lose their hold, and bend "aslant" the stream.'

166. **Hear**, or silvery-gray on the under side; and it is that side which would 'show in the glassy stream.'

168. **Crow-flowers**, the name in S.'s time for the 'Ragged Robin.'—**Purples**, a kind of orchid.

169. **Liberal**, free-spoken.

172. **Sliver**, a branch broken or torn off.

178. **Indued** = endowed with fitting qualities.

186. **Trick**, peculiar habit.

187. **When these are gone**, when my tears are shed, the woman will have departed out of me.

190. **Douts it** = puts it out. *Dout* = *do out*. Cf. *Don* for *do on*; *doff* for *do off*; *dup* for *do up* (or *open*).

## ACT FIFTH.

## SCENE 1.

4. **Straight** = straightway, at once.—**Crowner**, for *coroner*.

9. **Se offendendo** for *defendendo*.

12. **Argal** for Lat. *ergo*, therefore.

16. **Nil he** = ne will he. *Ne* is the O. E. negative, and was combined with *am* into *nam*; with *is* into *nis*; with *wolde* into *nolde* (= would not); with *were* into *nere*, etc.

This speech of the clown is said to be a satire on the case of Sir James Hales (in the time of Elizabeth). Sir James Hales had drowned himself; and the question arose whether his estates were forfeit to the Crown. Much legal subtlety was expended in discovering whether Sir James was the *agent* or the *patient*; who drowned him; and in showing that the living Sir James caused the dead Sir James to die; that the living man only must therefore be punished; but where was the living man? and so on.

21. **Quest** for *inquest*.

27. **Even Christian** = fellow-Christian.

29. **Hold up**, continue or maintain.

31. **The first**. Adam's spade is mentioned in some books of heraldry as the most ancient form of escutcheon.

49. **Unyoke**, take your rest, your work is done—a farm-servant's phrase.

52. **Mass** = by the mass.

57. **Stoup**, a word still in use in Scotland.

58. **In youth**. The verses that follow are from an old song attributed to Thomas, Lord Vaux, and published in 1557. The *O* and *ah* represent the pants and grunts after a stroke of the mattock.

60. **To contract**, a line without sense—due to the muddle-headedness or to the imperfect memory of the singer.

64. **A property of easiness**, a quality that sits lightly on his mind.

66. **Daintier**, more delicate.

69. **Intil**, into. A form still found in Scotland.

70. **Such** = young.



72. **Jowls**, knocks. We may imagine the clown knocking (jowling) the skull into the earth with his spade.

74. **Politician**, a schemer. S. always uses the word in a bad sense. So *politic* is used in the sense of *artful*.—**O'er-reaches**, gets the better of.

75. **Circumvent**, over-reach.

82. **Chapless**, jawless.

83. **Mazard**, head (used in a contemptuous sense).

84. **Revolution**, change of fortune by time.—**The trick** = the knack.

85. **Loggats**, a diminutive of *logs*. A kind of bowls, 'with a difference.'

88. **For and** = and eke.

92. **Quiddits** for *quiddities*, subtleties. *Quidditas* was the scholastic Latin for the essence of a thing.—**Quillets**, from Lat. *quidlibet*, whatever. (Cog., *Quibble*.) Lord Campbell remarks, 'The law terms which follow are all used seemingly with a full knowledge of their import.'

97. **Recognizances**, bonds to acknowledge money lent on land.

98. **Fine**, from Lat. *finis*, an end. (A *fine* in law is a sum of money paid to the lord by the tenant, for permission to transfer his lands to another.)

101. **Pair of indentures**. Indentures were contracts made out in duplicate. Both were written on one sheet of parchment, which was then cut in a zigzag fashion (hence the name *indenture*, from Lat. *dens, dent-is*, a tooth). Each party then received one of the two fitting parts; and the fact of their fitting proved the genuineness of the documents. Cf. the idea in *Tally*.

102. **Box**, coffin. (But it is in a *box* that attorneys keep their deeds.)—**Inheritor**, possessor.

107. **Assurance**, perfect security. With a double reference—one to the legal meaning, 'conveyance by deed.'

112. **Thine**. Hamlet uses the *thou* in speaking to the clown; but the clown employs the *you*. *Thou* was in S.'s time used (1) to friends; and (2) to servants; and (3) in contempt—just like the German *Du*.

116. **Quick**, living. Cf. the phrase in the Prayer-Book; 'The quick and the dead.'

126. **Absolute**, thorough-going in his demands.

126. **By the card**. The card was the circular disc of pasteboard on which the points of the compass were marked. Hence you must not say N.E. if the wind was really N.E. by N.

127. **Equivocation**, using words in two different senses. (From Lat. *æquus*, equal, and *vox*, a voice or word.)

128. **So pickèd**, so nice, so precise.

130. **Kibe**, chilblain on the heel.

135. **Hamlet was born**. This would make Hamlet thirty.

153. **Last you**, the *dativus ethicus*. The *your* as in *your philosophy* in I. v. 152.—**Eight year**. In older English, many neuter nouns had no plural ending; and we still have survivals of this in *sheep*, *deer*, *horse*, *pound*, *night* (in *fortnight*), *stone*, etc.

164. **Rhenish**, Rhine wine, 'hock.'

165. **Yorick** may either be a corruption of *Rorick* or of *Yörg*, the Danish for *George*.

171. **It**, all that is left of him.

173. **Gibes**, jeers and jokes.

174. **On a roar**. We still have the phrase, 'set on fire.'

175. **Chapfallen**, in two senses.

188. **Too curiously**, too elaborately, with too much care.

197. **Flaw**, blast or gust.

200. **Maimèd**, defective. By the old English law, which continued up to the present century, a suicide was buried, without any funeral service, at the meeting of four cross roads.

202. **Fordo**, undo.—**Estate**, rank.

203. **Couch**, crouch down and hide.

207. **Obsequies**, funeral rites.—**Enlarg'd**. Some ceremonies were added over and above those to which she was legally entitled.

208. **Warrantise** for *warranty*—another form of which is *guarantee*.

209. **Great command**, of the king.—**Order**, the order set or ordained by the Church.

212. **Shards**, potsherds, fragments of pottery.

213. **Crants**, garland. H. Ger. *Kranz*. Down to the

end of last century it was the custom in many country parishes of England to carry a garland of flowers before the coffin of an unmarried young woman.

214. **Bringing home**, to her last home, the notion being that the funeral was to be the counterpart of the procession bringing the bride home to the house of her husband.

218. **Requiem**, a song of rest for the dead. (Acc. of Lat. *requies*, rest.)

219. **Peace-parted** = departed in peace.

229. **Ingenious sense**, quick feeling.

234. **Pelion**, a mountain in Thessaly, near Mount Ossa. To pile Pelion upon Ossa' became a proverbial expression for exaggeration in statement.

235. **Blue Olympus**, a high mountain between Thessaly and Macedonia—the abode of the gods.

237. **Conjures** = adjures. — **Wand'ring stars** = the stars in their journey through the heavens.

238. **Wonder-wounded**, wonder-struck, 'struck' with surprise.

243. **Splenitive**. The spleen was supposed to be the seat of anger; as the heart of love, and the liver of revenge.

249. **Wag**, move.

255. **Forbear him**, leave him alone.

257. **Woo't** = *wouldst thou*. A colloquialism—which indicates his contempt for Laertes.

258. **Eisel**, vinegar. So as to have to make a wry face. Hamlet despises the overwrought grief of Laertes.

260. **Outface**, put me out of countenance.

269. **Golden complets**. The pigeon generally sits on two eggs; and, when her young are hatched (*disclosed*), they are covered with a yellow (*golden*) down.

277. **To the present push**, to the issue immediately.

279. **Living**. No doubt a hint to Laertes that Hamlet's life was going to be offered up in revenge for the death of Ophelia.

## SCENE 2.

6. **Mutines**, mutineers. — **Bilboes**, iron stocks used on board ship. From *Bilboa*, in Spain, which was famous

from Roman times for the manufacture of iron. — **Rashly**, hastily.

11. **Rough-hew**. *Rough-hewing* comes before the finer work of *shaping*.

13. **Scarf'd**, thrown loosely about me, my arms not put through the sleeves.

17. **To unseal** = as to unseal.

18. **Grand**, the official term.

19. **Exact**, carefully detailed.

20. **Several**, separate, different.

21. **Importing**, relating to.

22. **Bugs**, bugbears. (Cog., *Bogy*.) — **In my life**, in the event of my being allowed to live.

23. **Supervise** (a verb for a noun), at sight, on the first reading. — **Bated**, allowed.

29. **Be-netted**, the only instance of the word.

31. **They**, my brains.

33. **Statists**, statesmen.

34. **A baseness**. Blackstone says, 'Most of the great men of S.'s time, whose autographs have been preserved, wrote very bad hands; their secretaries, very neat ones.'

36. **Yeoman's service**, faithful service, such as the yeomen or minor freeholders were accustomed to render to England in war.

37. **The effect** = the substance or import.

41. **Wheaten**, to indicate industry and plenty.

42. **Comma**. Dr. Schmidt says that Hamlet's expression is purposely ludicrous. The full stop or period divides; the comma connects.

43. **Charge**, weight. S. also uses *charge* in the sense of *baggage*.

47. **Shriving-time**, time for confession (shrift). The term came afterwards to be synonymous with any short period.

48. **Ordinant**, ruling, arranging. The only instance of the word. A participle formed after the French model, like *marchant*, *couchant*, *rampant*, *regardant*, in heraldry.

50. **Model**, counterpart.

51. **The writ**, what was written.

52. **Subscrib'd**, signed.

54. **Was sequent**, followed.
57. **Make love to**, were eager for.
59. **Insinuation**, in the primary meaning of the word—winding themselves into the business.
61. **Pass**, thrust.
62. **Opposites**, opponents.
63. **Thinks thee**. Like *meseems*, *methinks*, *methought*, etc. The *think* in *methinks* comes from *þinkan*, to seem, and is always intransitive; the *think* in *I think* is from *þencan*, to think, which is always transitive.—**Stand . . . upon**, is incumbent on me.
66. **My proper** = my own.
68. **Quit him**, pay him off.
69. **Come in further evil**, commit further crimes.
72. 'You never suspect the errand Hamlet is on until you happen to hear that little word, "*the interim is mine!*" It means more mischief than all the monologues. No threats; no imprecations; no more mention of smiling, damned villain; no more self-accusal; but solely and briefly, "*It will be short; the interim is mine!*" Then, for the first time, we recognize the extent of the change that has been wrought in Hamlet; then, for the first time, we perfectly comprehend his quiet jesting with the clown, his tranquil musings with Horatio. The man is transformed by a great resolve; his mind is made up. The return of the vessel from England will be the signal for his own execution, and therefore the moral problem is solved; the only chance of saving his life from a lawless murderer is to slay him; it has become an act of self-defence; he can do it with perfect conscience. . . . At the very moment he encounters the clown in the churchyard, he is on his death-march to the palace at Elsinore.'—MILES.
78. **Bravery**, showiness.
81. **Water-fly**. 'A water-fly skips up and down upon the surface of the water without any apparent purpose or reason, and is thence the emblem of a busy trifler.'—DR. JOHNSON.
85. **Crib**, manger.—**Mess**, dining table.—**Chough**, a kind of jackdaw.

86. **Spacious**, broad-acred.
87. **Sweet lord**. Osric speaks the euphuistic language so fashionable in the time of Queen Elizabeth.
93. **Indifferent cold**, rather cold.
94. **Complexion**, constitution.
100. **For mine ease**. I feel easier with it off.
101. **Absolute**, perfect.
102. **Differences**, distinctions that set him high above other men.
103. **Great showing**, elegant appearance.—**Feelingly**, accurately—with a proper feeling of each good quality in him (= to speak him home).
104. **Card or calendar of gentry**. 'The card (see note on V. i. 126) by which a gentleman is to direct his course; the calendar by which he is to choose his time, that what he does may be both excellent and seasonable.'—J.—**Gentry**, like Chaucer's *genterie* or *gentelesse*.
105. **The continent**. The metaphor is taken from a map; and *part* is used in two senses.
106. **His definement** = the definition of him.—**Perdition**, loss.
107. **Inventorially**, as if one were drawing up an inventory.
108. **Yaw** (for *would yaw*), a nautical term for a ship falling away from, and not answering, the helm. (The passage is almost unintelligible, and is probably corrupt.)
110. **Of great article** = of many items and qualities (*articles* are the particulars in an inventory).—**His infusion**, essence.—**Deareth** = dearness or high value.
111. **His semblable**, the only thing like him.
112. **Trace**, follow—but also used in the secondary sense of *delineate*.—**Umbrage**, shadow, from Lat. *umbra*.
114. **The concernancy?** What does all this point to?
118. **You will do't**, you will succeed in understanding, if you try.
119. **What imports**, why has this gentleman been named?
125. **Much approve me** = be much to my credit.
127. **Compare with** = assume to rival.

129. **Imputation** = that which is imputed to him, reputation.—**Laid on him**, won for him.

130. **By them**, by his weapons. Osric uses *weapon* in a collective sense.—**Meed**, merit.

135. **Imponed**, staked.

136. **Assigns**, appendages, belongings.—**Hangers**, the straps which attach the sheath to the belt or girdle.

137. **Responsive**, are in keeping with.

138. **Liberal conceit**, free and charming design.

140. **Must be edified by the margent**, be compelled to have recourse to the notes—which in old books were printed in the margin.—**Margent** (the only form in S.), margin.

143. **Germane** = appropriate, akin.

152. **Answer**, in the sense of meeting; though Hamlet intentionally takes it in the other sense.

156. **Breathing-time**, time for exercise and a constitutional.

160. **Re-deliver**, report.

165. **Lapwing**. The young lapwing was said to run away with the shell on its head as soon as it was hatched.

166. **Comply** = pay compliments to.

169. **Outward habit**, superficial manner.—**Encounter**, address.—**Yesty**, frothy.

170. **Fond**, foolish.—**Winnowed** (from *wind*), separated (the chaff) from the wheat.

171. **Bubbles**. Here the metaphor changes. Osric is like *chaff*, winnowed from the wheat; and like *bubbles*, which rise to the surface of the water.

173. **Commended him** (= himself), sent you his compliments.

178. **Fitness**, convenience.

181. **In happy time**. In good time.

182. **Gentle entertainment**, some courteous talk.

187. **At the odds** = with the odds I have.

188. **How ill all's here**. Coleridge says, 'S. seems to mean all Hamlet's character to be brought together before his final disappearance from the scene: his meditative excess in the grave-digging, his yielding to passion with Laertes, his love for Ophelia blazing out, his tendency to

generalize on all occasions in the dialogues with Horatio, his fine gentlemanly manners with Osric, and his and Laertes's own fondness for presentiment.'

191. **Gain-giving**, misgiving. We have *gainsay*; and we had *gainstrive* and *gainstand*.

194. **Fit**, ready.

198. **The readiness is all**. The same thought occurs in *King Lear*, V. ii. 11.—**Has aught**, can take anything with him.

199. **What is't** = what matters it if we have to?

203. **Presence** = the people present.

206. **Exception**, objection. We have this meaning still in the phrase, *To take exception to*.

207. **Madness**. Hamlet has still, in the king's presence, to keep up the mask of madness—lest he should put the king too much on his guard.

215. **Audience**, like *presence* in line 203.

216. **Disclaiming from** = disavowal of.—**Purpos'd evil**, intentional harm.

219. **In nature** = so far as my natural feelings are concerned.

220. **Whose motive** = the moving power of which.

221. **In my terms of honor**, so far as (conventional) honor is concerned.

224. **Precedent of peace**, a precedent among affairs of honor which will justify me in making peace.

225. **Ungor'd**, unhurt.

232. **Stick fiery off**, be set off brilliantly, stand out in brilliant prominence.

241. **Likes me**. *Me* is a dative.—**A** = one. See note on I. ii. 11.

245. **Quit**, pay him off.—**The third exchange** of thrust and parry.

248. **Union**, a perfect pearl—'a large solitary pearl not set with other jewels.' (From Lat. *unus*, one.)

251. **Kettle**, kettle-drum.

258. **This pearl is thine**, and he pours the poison in.

264. **Napkin**, handkerchief.

274. **Pass**, thrust.

275. **Wanton of** = trifle with me as if you were playing



with a child. 'This is a quiet but very significant stroke of delineation. Laertes is not playing his best, and it is the consciousness of what is at the point of his foil that keeps him from doing so; and the effects are perceptible to Hamlet, though he dreams not of the reason.'

278. **Incensed**, angry.

282. **Springe**, snare. A writer in *Notes and Queries* says, 'This bird is trained to decoy other birds, and sometimes, while strutting incautiously too near the springe, it becomes itself entangled.'

284. **How does the queen?** What is the matter with her?

304. **Temper'd**, mixed.

311. **Mutes**, personages who have no speaking parts in the play.

316 **Unsatisfied**, not fully informed.

329. **O'er-crows**, overcomes.

333. **Occurrents**, things that have occurred, incidents. The only instance of the word.

334. **Solicited**, prompted (my action). Sentence incomplete.

340. **Quarry**, dead game. *This quarry* = these slaughtered persons. (There are two words *quarry* in English, (1) from low Lat. *quadrare*, to make square; (2) from O. Fr. *corée*; from Lat. *cor*, the heart, because the heart and entrails were given to the hunting dogs.)—**Cries on havoc**, calls for slaughter and attack with no quarter given.

341. **Toward**, going on.—**Eternal**. S. seems to use this word as the strongest epithet he knows.

348. **His mouth**, the king's.

357. **Carnal**, sensual.

359. **Put on**, instigated.

360. **Upshot**. Conclusion or final issue.

362. **Deliver**, recount.

365. **Rights of memory** = rights which are remembered.

368. **Will draw on more** = will be seconded by others.

371. **On plots** = in consequence of plots.—**Four captains**. This was the custom in the case of a soldier of high rank.

373. **Put on** = put to the test, had he become king.

374. **Passage**, departure from this life.

375. **Rites of war**. Mr. Moberly, excellently—as usual, ‘Late, and under the strong compulsion of approaching death, he has done, and well done, the inevitable task from which his gentle nature shrank. Why then any further thought, in the awful presence of death, of crimes, conspiracies, vengeance? Think that he has been slain in battle, like his Sea-king forefathers · and let the booming cannon be his mourners.’

# EXAMINATION PAPERS.

[Several taken from the CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION PAPERS.]

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## A (FIRST ACT).

1. Give a brief but connected account of the incidents in the First Act.
2. What state of feeling seems to exist in Hamlet's mind in relation to the King, and to the Queen? Quote lines in justification of your view.
3. State by whom, to whom, and on what occasions the following lines were uttered :—
  - (a) What art thou that *usurp'st* this time of night?
  - (b) Was sick almost *to doomsday* with eclipse.
  - (c) An understanding *simple* and unschooled.
  - (d) Would I had met my *dearest* foe in heaven.
  - (e) More honored in the *breach* than the observance.
4. Quote the lines which precede or which follow the above.
5. Explain fully and annotate the words in italics.
6. Explain fully the following words and phrases : (a) *The sensible and true avouch*; (b) *romage*; (c) *extravagant*; (d) *lose your voice*; (e) *defeated*; (f) *slow leave*; (g) *discourse of reason*; (h) *primy nature*; (i) *addition*; (j) *bound to hear*; (k) *unhouselled*; (l) *without more circumstance*.

7. Give some examples of the peculiarities of Shakespeare's grammar.

### B (SECOND ACT).

1. What new personages are introduced in the Second Act; and what are their respective functions in the play?

2. Describe shortly Hamlet's interview with the PLAYERS.

3. State in your own words the sum of Hamlet's reflections at the end of this Act.

4. State by whom, of whom, and on what occasions the following lines were said :—

(a) With *windlances*, and with *assays of bias*.

(b) Ungarter'd and *down-gyvèd* to his ankle.

(c) To show us so much *gentry* and good-will.

(d) If I had play'd the desk or *table-book*.

(e) How *express* and admirable!

(f) I know a hawk from a *hermsaw*.

5. Annotate the words in italics.

6. Explain fully the following words and phrases: (a) *Keep*; (b) *fetch of warrant*; (c) *shatter all his bulk*; (d) *borne in hand*; (e) *round with him*; (f) *lungs tickle o' the sere*; (g) *eyases*; (h) *region*; (i) *the general ear*; (j) *organ*.

7. Quote the lines in which the above words and phrases occur.

8. Give some examples of Shakespeare's use of the *dative*.

### C (THIRD ACT).

1. Describe the character of Ophelia, and contrast her with the Queen.

2. Give the substance of the King's soliloquy in Scene Third.

3. Quote lines from this and from the First Act to show the opinion which Hamlet held of his father and of his uncle.

4. State by whom, of whom, and on what occasions the following lines were said :—

- (a) Who would *fardels* bear,  
 To *grunt* and sweat under a weary life ?  
 (b) And I do doubt the *hatch* and the *disclose*.  
 (c) O'erstep not the *modesty* of nature.  
 (d) *Confederate* season, else no creature seeing.  
 (e) Up, sword ! and know thou a more horrid *hent* !  
 (f) *Conceit* in weakest bodies strongest works.

5. Annotate fully the words in italics.

6. Give some instances (a) of Shakespeare's use of a verb as a noun ; and (b) of his employment of prolepsis.

7. Explain fully the following words and phrases : (a) *Affront* ; (b) *the rub* ; (c) *in the ear* ; (d) *by and by* ; (e) *the cease of majesty* ; (f) *broad-blown* ; (g) *mope* ; (h) *capable of* ; (i) *conclusions*.

#### D (FOURTH ACT).

1. Give a short, but connected, account of the incidents in this Act.

2. Give the substance of Hamlet's soliloquy in the Fourth Scene.

3. State the substance of the conversation of the King with Laertes in the Seventh Scene.

4. State by whom, of whom or what, and on what occasions the following lines were said :—

- (a) As level as the cannon to *his blank*.
  - (b) Your fat king is but *variable service*.
  - (c) Thinking too *precisely* on the *event*.
  - (d) The ocean, *overpeering* of his *list*.
  - (e) They have dealt with me like *thieves of mercy*.
  - (f) For goodness, growing to a *plurisy*.
5. Explain fully the words in italics.
  6. Explain the following words and phrases: (a) *The main*; (b) *makes mouths*; (c) *of large discourse*; (d) *not continent enough*; (e) *a riotous head*; (f) *a document in madness*; (g) *much unsinewed*; (h) *uncharge*; (i) *passages of proof*; (j) *mortal*.
  7. Quote examples (a) of Shakespeare's use of the Northern plural; and (b) of such phrases as *his means of death*.

#### E (FIFTH ACT).

1. What are the events outside and also within the play that are gradually maturing the catastrophe; and what change seems to come over Hamlet's own mind?
2. Quote passages from Polonius's and from Osric's speeches to illustrate the euphuism of the time.
3. Quote the passage which shows that Hamlet had a presentiment of what was coming.
4. State by whom, of whom or what, and on what occasions the following lines were uttered:—
  - (a) Tell me that, and *unyoke*.
  - (b) The length and breadth of a pair of *indentures*.
  - (c) This grave shall have a living monument.
  - (d) With, ho! such *bugs* and goblins *in my life*.
  - (e) And in the cup an *union* shall he throw.

(f) Absent thee from felicity awhile.

5. Explain fully the words in italics.

6. Annotate the following words and phrases : (a) *On the supervise* ; (b) *jowls it* ; (c) *his quilllets* ; (d) *warrantize* ; (e) *conjures the stars* ; (f) *too curiously* ; (g) *benefited* ; (h) *near my conscience* ; (i) *spacious* ; (j) *comply with* ; (k) *outward habit* ; (l) *quarry* ; (m) *even-Christian*.

7. Give some examples (a) of Shakespeare's use of an abstract for a concrete term ; (b) of his use of *a* in the sense of *one* ; and (c) of his 'ethical' use of *you*.

8. Write a short account of the character of *Hamlet* ; and quote lines to bear out your opinions.











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